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T H E
 FIRST PRINCIPLES
 O F
 CIVIL and ECCLESIASTICAL
 G O V E R N M E N T,
 D E L I N E A T E D,
 (IN TWO PARTS,)
 I N
 L E T T E R S
 T O
 Dr. P R I E S T L E Y,
 OCCASIONED BY HIS TO
 Mr. B U R K E.

By SAMUEL COOPER, D. D.
 MINISTER OF GREAT YARMOUTH.

—Οὐκ ἄρα, ὦ βελτιστε, πάνυ ἡμῶν
 ἔτιω Φροντιστέον ὅ, τι ἐρᾷσιν οἱ πολλοὶ ἡμᾶς, ἀλλ'
 ὅ, τι ὁ ἐπαίων περὶ τῶν δικαίων καὶ ἀδίκων, ὁ εἷς,
 καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ ἀλήθεια. ὥς πρῶτον μὲν ταύτη ἐν
 ὁρθῶς εἰσηγῇ, εἰσηγόμενος τῆς τῶν πολλῶν δόξης
 δεῖν ἡμᾶς Φροντίζειν περὶ τῶν δικαίων καὶ καλῶν
 καὶ ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τῶν ἐναντίων.

Y A R M O U T H :
 PRINTED BY DOWNES AND MARCH,
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 And ELLIOT and KAY, EDINBURGH.

M. DCC. XCI.



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THE
P R I N C I P L E S
O F
G O V E R N M E N T,
D E L I N E A T E D.
PART THE FIRST,
O N
CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

— *et ordinem*
Rectum evaganti frena licentiæ
Injecit, —

— *non furor*
Civilis, aut vis exiget OTIUM
Non ira, quæ procudit enses
Et miseras inimicat urbes.

HOR.

1906420



L E T T E R S
TO THE
Rev. Dr. PRIESTLEY.

L E T T E R I.

SIR,

AS soon as I had read *Mr. Burke's* justly celebrated "*Reflections*," I entertained no doubt, but that you would attempt to answer them, before I saw your declaration of such an intention, publicly announced in the newspapers. Do not however imagine, that I am so absurd as to think, that such a discovery is a proof either of any uncommon sagacity, or laborious application of mind; as it only required for it's foundation, some attention to

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the ideal channels, through which, your multifarious writings have generally flowed. For even a very slight observation, is all which is necessary to enable any one to discover, that you are (*in Bishop Warburton's phrase*) "*An Answerer by Profession,*" to every work, written in defence of the present civil and ecclesiastical government of this country. A constitution of government, which under the liberal shelter of it's wide extended branches protects you, from every storm and blast of persecution; and affords to every unhappy wanderer in exile, or even outcast from all religions, a secure retreat, in which, he may eat his bread in comfort, peace, liberty, and safety.

I have now at length read your promised publication, though I was for some time prevented by a variety of avocations, from indulging myself in that pleasure, for which I so eagerly wished. And, as I had not been before deceived in my expectation,
of

of seeing *some* answer from you; so likewise I am not now in the least disappointed, in finding it to be, *such* an answer, as it is. For, exactly the same observation, which supplied me with the grounds of probability for the one, equally furnished me with the means of conjecturing, what would be the materials, and texture of the other.

But, impatient however as I was to examine the work itself; my attention was for some time unwillingly detained, in the contemplation of the *mottos* which adorn the title-page. For I have been totally at a loss to conceive, what could possibly be your intention, purport, or design, in blazoning the front of your pamphlet with those sentences. The most proper motive, which, I conceive, can prompt a writer to prefix a motto to a work; is, to induce his readers to embrace the sentiments which he holds, by showing, that they are likewise the opinions of another, to whom, from

a justly acquired authority, more deference is due, than to the author himself. But this motive appears, to me, to be totally inapplicable to the present case. Because, the mottos were taken from Mr. Burke's own "*Reflections*," which it was your professed design to refute; and consequently therefore to prove them to be so far from having any claim to deference, that they were not even entitled to any one's assent. But, with this design in view, to quote Mr. Burke as an *Oracle*, from whose sentence there was no appeal; seems to me to be as unaccountable a conduct, as his would be, who, after having boasted of his skill and courage, and even challenged another to a duel, should, at the very moment, he was accoutred for the combat, instantly confess the invincible powers of his antagonist, seize his adversary's sword, and by plunging it into his own breast, commit a desperate act of suicide.

What

What then Sir, could possibly be your intention, in quoting these sentences, or axioms from Mr. Burke, appears to me to be totally inexplicable, upon any principles of reason, and sound sense. To evince, that this declaration neither contains an assertion destitute of proof, nor implies a censure unsupported by justice, permit me, to transcribe the mottoes.

"Eloquence may exist without a proportionable degree of wisdom."

"Steady independent minds, when they have an object of so serious a concern to mankind as GOVERNMENT, under their contemplation, will disdain to assume the part of SATIRISTS and DECLAIMERS."

As to the latter motto, it is I must confess, the very last, which I should have conceived, prudence would have suffered you to have chosen. For it can serve no other

other purpose, than to show, that you stand self condemned by your own quotations; as every one at all conversant with your writings, must know, that they *abound* in satire and declamation upon the government of your country; if indeed it be admitted, that compositions are entitled to those appellations, which contain gross invectives without wit, and bold assertions without elegance.

As to the FIRST, that, "*eloquence MAY exist without a proportionable degree of wisdom,*" this is certainly as true, as that Mr. Burke possesses one of the highest degrees of eloquence, which was ever the portion of any human mind. And consequently, such a maxim coming from one so well qualified by his own unrivalled eloquence and consummate wisdom, to form a judgement upon this point, it must necessarily make a very forcible impression upon the minds of others. But then, the quotation still only serves to promulgate

promulgate *Mr. Burke's* AUTHORITY, NOT YOURS; the latter of which in this case, required support, even to the demolition of his. Was the insertion of it then owing, to one of those mistakes, to which you have been so subject, in your "*Corruptions of the History of Christianity?*" I beg your pardon, I believe the *title*, which you give to it, is, the *History of the Corruptions of Christianity*.

It may be possible, that in the "*rapid glance,*" which according to your usual practice, you took of Mr. Burke's book, you read it THUS, "*eloquence NEVER EXISTS with a proportionate degree of wisdom.*" If this was the fact, *then* indeed you have quoted it with the most singular propriety; as thinking, you condemned Mr. Burke out of his own mouth. But then your printer, by correcting the mistake in the words of the sentence, has most unfortunately obliterated all meaning from it's application.

Or,

Or, did the mistake arise, not from any imperfection in your SIGHT, but from the much greater misfortune, of a cataract forming upon your REASON? Did you conclude, that if, eloquence MAY exist without a proportionable degree of knowledge, it necessarily MUST do so in *Mr. Burke*? Now though this can never be admitted as a legitimate deduction, till every just principle of *logic* be first destroyed, yet even an assent to this inference, would neither diminish *Mr. Burke's* authority, nor increase yours. For even strip him of all his eloquence, which kills at every stroke, and leave him only his wisdom; he would still be but like *Pallas* robbed of her spear, but whose *Ægis* alone will strike her opponents dumb in confusion, horror, and dismay.*

But

* *Mr. Burke* will I hope excuse me if I make an exception, in respect to the impeachment of *Mr. Hastings*, where he seems to have dipped the point of his spear in venom, and to have thrown away his shield.

But perhaps, as none of the suppositions which I have already made, can furnish even a shadow of a reason for your adoption of this first motto; there may still be another inference, which you may have deduced from it, which may appear to you, to evince the much greater deference due to the authority of your name, than to that of Mr. Burke. For, as it is allowed, that eloquence MAY EXIST without a *proportionable* degree of wisdom, you may perhaps therefore conclude, that in that mind, in which, NO ELOQUENCE EXISTS, there MUST BE the HIGHEST DEGREE of WISDOM. And indeed, if this did not happen to be an inference, which a Tyro in the Soph's Schools at Cambridge, would laugh at as a deduction from such premises, (no wonder therefore you lament in your letters, that the youth of your persuasion are not admitted into our Universities) it would undoubtedly, hold forth to you, the palm of superiority, and the garland of victory. For

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though

though it must be confessed, that numbers can not forbear to lament, that your writings are much too barren in argument, too fertile in invective, and too copious in assertion,—it must likewise be acknowledged, that no one was ever daring enough, to have the injustice to accuse you, of exhibiting in them at any time, even the faintest glimmer, of the dimmest ray of ELOQUENCE.

What renders this last conjecture of mine, the more probable, is, that this deduction which I now suppose you to have made, appears to be not only a current opinion, but even an universally received axiom amongst all those living authors, who are either honoured with encomiums from your pen, or who offer up incense at your shrine.

It was indeed formerly supposed, that an UNION, of the faculties of MEMORY, IMAGINATION, WIT, JUDGEMENT, REASONING,

REASONING, SAGACITY, INTELLECT, and of INVENTION, long employed in deep thinking and profound investigation, could alone qualify any one to become a writer; and that as every man's smallest pretence to literary reputation, must be founded upon some participation of these qualities, so, the respective degrees in fame, to which different individuals were entitled, must be estimated, by the various rays, into which their genius could be resolved, when disentangled from the almost infinite variety of modes of combination, in which those rays are capable of being blended.

Upon these principles it is, that HOMER and VIRGIL, DEMOSTHENES and CICERO, SOCRATES, PLATO, and ARISTOTLE, SHAKESPEAR and MILTON, BACON and BERKLEY, NEWTON and LOCKE, must be elevated to the highest seats in the temple of fame.

But, the great LIBERALITY of SENTIMENT, of the present age, of which, we hear from you, and other writers, such frequent and just encomiums, has, very kindly dispensed with the necessity, of setting forth a title to genius, by means, which demand so much labour from the claimants, and require so much nice discrimination in the judges. For, the present enlightened age, justly so denominated as every school boy knows upon classical authority, (as, *Lucus a non lucendo*,) have found, some nearer, though crooked and subterraneous paths to the temple of fame. By passing along these, and by frequent and importunate applications at the doors of some of the lower offices of the fane, they gain free admittance, and are soon led up by a secret ascent into the most spacious and splendid apartments of the place. Whilst they, who by the *plain* and *direct* path approach the central door, which always stands open, and enter without courting the porter,

ter, are obliged to remain crouded in the narrow entries and passages of the edifice. But no sooner has Death with Time asserted their claims, than the latter, by their ætherial nature mount aloft, and are then venerated as the guides, the guardians, and enlighteners, of mankind. Whilst the putrid carcases of the former, are thrown out in scornful silence, to be devoured by the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field, unless some future author, should from mere pity and compassion, afterwards gather their scattered limbs together ;—place them in the niches of some future *Biographia Britannica*,—and embalm them,—with all the gums and unguents,—which besmear the bodies of Egyptian Kings.

This is one of the happy improvements, which we owe, to the flood of light, poured in upon us, in modern times: So that even you Sir, who, are now upon these principles, upborn upon the strongest waxened wings

wings of modern fame, and who, if we believe your own writings, are much wiser than the Apostles; even you, need never to be in fear, lest you should be rebuked with the censure that the apostle Paul was, that "*much learning has made you mad.*"

But, were there indeed another GREY to appear, who had with much application so strengthened, and cultivated his native vigour, as with ease to vault upon the back of Pegasus, and could turn and manage him as he pleased; HE would be hooted at by the majority, and mistaken for a Centaur. Or, were another BERKELEY to arise, and pour forth the streams which he had imbibed from the very depth of the Pierian Spring, too refined for the taste, and too subtle for the palate of modern times; his genius, would with all the delicacy of modern wit be ridiculed; and his inspirations be stigmatized, and condemned, as the intoxicating fumes of the
inspiring

inspiring Bacchus, or as the frantic ravings of the Pythian Priests.

Though the discovery, which I have already related, be certainly the brightest which has been made by the moderns, yet it must not be concealed, that there is another, which indeed followed from it as a consequence; and which truly if not quite so ingenious, is at least equally useful.

For it has been found, that the world is at present so saturated with knowledge and wisdom, that BOOK-WRITING is no longer therefore of any value; and it has therefore been ingeniously resolved to substitute, in its place,—BOOK-MAKING. Nothing certainly can redound more to the honour of the *humanity* of the present times, than this resolution of saving all expence of thought, and consequently all the fatigue of mind, and maceration of the body, which
so

so much harrassed the antients. For by this admirable discovery, every one now who can but read, is rendered qualified at once, to become a critic, and an author.

In the science of BOOK-MAKING, there are however certainly two degrees, which are often confounded by the vulgar. For, the same terms of commendation, viz. of ingenuity, and of learning, are often indiscriminately bestowed upon both ; not a doubt being entertained whether those terms, are with justice, applicable to either. The one species, so little requires the use of a pen ; that any one who was never even taught to write, may rise in it, to the very apex of fame. A strong instrument of iron, whether fashioned into the form of a knife, or of scissars, if it be but able to cut the works of other writers in pieces, and some flour and water, condensed into paste firm enough to join together again the "*disjecti* "*Membra Poetae*," are all the acquisitions which

which are requisite for any one, who would reach the highest excellence in this branch of the art. The other, it must be confessed, demands from it's cultivators, a little more labour. For in this case, the person who would impart food to others, must first swallow it himself; and then, before it has at all contributed to his own nutrition, he must with some pains and struggles disgorge it, and arrange it in some decent order, so that the heterogeneous morsels may not offend the stomachs of his guests. Or, perhaps, this latter species of BOOK-MAKING, may with more decorum be compared, to those pasteboards which are invented for the use of children, and are called *geographical dissected maps*. These, whilst they are shut up in their boxes, are a mere "*rudis indigestaque Moles*," exactly resembling the juxta position of the ideas of a book-maker, while deposited in his memory; but both which, the most ignorant, may by a very slight operation, and consequently

frequently one very easily learned, without knowing any thing of the boundaries and relations of countries in the one, or of the connection between the sciences in the other, arrange in such order, as to teach something at least by this mechanic process; which, the weakness of the learners intellects, would be incapable of acquiring, by a scientific progression.

I trust Sir, that you, do not conceive me to be at all wandering from the particular subject of my address, by this short, but just account of the discoveries of modern authors; as it has certainly the closest connection with your Letters to *Mr. Burke*.* He being a writer entitled to fame,
only

* By modern Authors, I hope it will be understood, I mean only, certain writers in the Southern parts of this Isle. For, in the more Northern, the Authors when they err, err ingeniously; still continuing to habituate themselves to much deep
thinking;

only upon the old exploded claim of the anti-
 ents. Whilst you, Sir, are at once the
 great discoverer, and grand exemplar of the
 much more illustrious modification of the
 claim, by the moderns. You standing in-
 disputably the first in fame amongst the
 present class of writers, which I have been
 last describing; not only for the excellence,
 but likewise, without even excepting Dr.
 Hill of famous memory, for the multipli-
 city, and multifarioufness of your works.

But should you perchance at present, de-
 ny that there is any connection, between
 this delineation and the subject of your
 letters, I do not despair in my progress, to
 make even *you* for once confess, that *you*
 are *mistaken*; notwithstanding your constant
 habit of congratulating yourself upon a vic-

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tory,

thinking; they have as yet exhibited, but few traits
 of their neighbours wonderful improvements, in the
 craft, art, trade, and mystery of BOOK-MAKING.

tory, and of ordering your followers to sing *Io Paxan*, when all the rest of the world are witnesses of your defeat.* I am persuaded the film will soon be so entirely removed from before your eyes, that you will see, "*Luce clarius*," that the foregoing observations, not only form a proper introduction to an examination of your letters, but that the examination itself, will likewise illustrate, and confirm the observations. Both of them, by their mutual attraction, giving durability to each others cohesion, and adding solidity to each others weight.

Before, however, I conclude this letter, it may not perhaps be unnecessary to obviate a charge, with which, I may very probably be arraigned in my account of
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* See the Controversy between the Bishop of St. David, and Dr. Priestley.

the genius, and invention, of the present times. To have passed by unnoticed, the pursuits of ELECTRICITY and CHEMISTRY, which not only so much occupy the attention of the present age, but which, it is conceived, will entitle it to the highest celebrity in future times, it will perhaps be said, could only arise either from the grossest ignorance, or the most flagrant injustice. But I can most solemnly assure such accusers, that no one, is more ready than I am, to bestow on such researches, all the praise which is due to them; and that no one would more rejoice than I should, to see them so far pursued, that from the collection of a multitude of particular facts, such principles shall be educed, as will supply firm foundations, for the erection of those fashionable studies, into *fabrics* of *science*. Though I cannot however forbear at the same time, most sincerely to lament, that other sciences have hitherto received much injury from the present fond predilection,

lection, and warm partiality in favour of those pursuits. For, whilst their almost bigotted admirers, have had, not the work of *Architects*, but only as it were of *Labourers* to perform, having had more call for the use of their hands and eyes, than of their REASON and INTELLECT, yet the fame which has been bestowed upon them by the kind indulgence of a partial public, has so inflated them with the conceit of their own merit, greatness, and importance, as to make them think themselves entitled to dogmatize upon far different subjects, which are founded upon a very different species of knowledge, than what they have really acquired; and requires the employment of very different faculties, from those, which they were wont to exercise. This false conceit however, it must be confessed, ought not to be considered as the peculiar characteristic of this age and country. For though now BERKELEY is gone, we shall search in vain for *another Plato*, yet even
in

in this divine Philosopher's time, we find, that the same partiality for experiments upon sensible objects, had occasioned the same delirium at Athens, as it has since produced in England. For, HE tells us, there were even then, SOME MEN, who FANCIED themselves to be PHILOSOPHERS, "*who would not believe, THAT could be ANY-THING, which they could not GRASP with their HANDS, and who would not listen to a Philosopher, who spoke to them of ANY-THING, which was NOT BODY.*" *

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

* See Plato in Sophista, and Priestley's Disquisition on Matters and Spirit, &c.

ERRATUM.—Page 10, last l. after *Imagination*, add TASTE.

L E T T E R

 L E T T E R II.

SIR,

THOUGH I am so unfortunate, as to entertain an opinion, that your first, and second Letter, resemble batteries, which are so feeble in their construction, and so ill supplied with ammunition, that an adversary may safely pass them by, regardless of every annoyance, they can possibly give to his forces in their march,—I trust to your *good nature*, and *meekness* for pardon. For, if I should boldly advance with my troops, at once to attack your principal forts, there to encounter your utmost strength, and should miscarry in my design ; mine, would be, the defeat, and shame ; yours, the triumph,

triumph, and glory. Should I however succeed, I shall perhaps return, and then demolish those batteries; which, for their weakness, I before neglected; and if I am right in my first conjecture, I shall, I think, find, that mere firing off some of their guns, will cause them to tumble into pieces, even by the mere force of the recoil.

ONE of your PRINCIPAL FORTS, which by standing first, is most prominent to the sight, is called, "THE NATURE OF GOVERNMENT, OR THE RIGHTS OF MEN AND OF KINGS." Now the forces, which you have brought together, as the sole support, upon which you rely for it's defence; seem to be, the most extraordinary, that *any* one who vaunts himself upon his abilities, as a general, could possibly have selected. And even still more extraordinary is it, that of all men, you, in particular, should have chosen them, who pride yourself upon al-

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ways carrying on *your polemics*, under the banner of REASON. For, it is, by that *power's* peculiar predilection for you, the supplies which it lends to you alone, and it's panoply with which it has always covered you, that you boast, you have become victorious in all your engagements, and have trampled underfoot,—Infidels,—Jews,—Christians,—Bishops,—and Apostles.

But, it is now time perhaps, to drop all metaphor; and quote the plain language (for so it is in this place) of your Pamphlet.

You begin, with telling Mr. Burke, that,
 “considering how much has been written
 “on the subject of government, since the
 “revolution in this country, which more
 “than any thing contributed to open the
 “eyes of Englishmen, with respect to the
 “true principles of it, it is not a little
 “extraordinary that any man of *reading*
 “and

“and *reflection* as he is, should depart
 “ from them so much as he has done.”

The only observation, which I shall make upon this passage at present, is, that the inserting of the word “*Reflection*” which it contains; seems to have arisen from a mere slip of your pen. For, we must necessarily infer, only from the next paragraph but one; that you do NOT think it *extraordinary*, that Mr. Burke, should have deviated from those principles, by the aid of “*Reflection*,” but, that as this was in reality, the cause of his departure from them: that he is in your opinion, for that very reason, deserving of censure,—because he *did reflect* upon them, and not take them *for granted*; as you think, he ought to have done.

For, after laying down what you suppose to be the fundamental principle of government, according to Lord Somers, Mr. Locke,

and Bishop Hoadley, you say, (addressing yourself to Mr. Burke.)

“ You, Sir, do not directly, and in so many words deny these great principles of all government, or the general conclusion drawn from them. In fact, you admit them *all* when you allow, page 87, that *civil society* is made for the *advantage* of man.” “ But you advance what is really inconsistent with these leading principles, and you would *tie up our hands* from making any *effectually use of them*. “ You seem to have forgotten, what you must have formerly learned; but *it is too late for us to go to school again, and relearn the first elements of political science*. “ What our *predecessors* took great pains to PROVE, we now receive as AXIOMS, and WITHOUT HESITATION ACT *upon them*.”

Now, however divided men may be in their sentiments upon this Paragraph, in
respect

respect to it's truth, so far as it contains a charge against Mr. Burke, and the reasons upon which, you have grounded it; yet I doubt not, but they will be as unanimously, free from hesitation, in *believing* this last declaration, of yours, respecting yourself and your friends, as you, and any of them can possibly be in *making* and *acting*, in the strictest conformity with it.

In reference to Mr. Burke, this Paragraph certainly, upon first "*looking through it*," appears to accuse him only of *forgetfulness* of those principles, which you suppose him to have forsaken. But if, to our looking, we add the slightest consideration upon it, we see most clearly, that it also contains (as I just now hinted) an *equal* condemnation of him, if upon REFLECTION HE has *changed* those sentiments, which YOU STILL *maintain*. For, by the declaration of your own conduct, you censure that man as unwise, who examines afterwards

terwards, what he was taught at school, and condemn it as an impropriety in an old man, even to DOUBT the truth of an opinion, which, he had learned, when he was a boy. This certainly is an idea, diametrically opposite to the sentiments, and practice of the wisest of the antients, which likewise every school-boy must have been taught, who, has made even but a very small progress in learning; but, which it seems, YOU, YOURSELF with all your predilection for your infant knowledge, and censure, upon Mr. Burke, for his supposed failing in this respect;—have either forgotten, or discarded.

Whether therefore, Mr. B's dereliction of his youthful principles, have arisen from the sterility of his present memory, or the copiousness of his manly Reflections, neither cause, is sufficiently unusual, to excite either wonder, or surprise. The one, I must confess, from the vast treasures, which

we

we see Mr. B. continually bringing forth from the repository of his memory, does not appear to me, to be the real cause, though you have assigned it. And the other, has always been esteemed, deserving of the highest approbation, except by *Popes* and *Cardinals*, 'till you condemned it. That *they* should feel a dislike to such a conduct, we cannot wonder, because there seems to be the most perfect *elective attraction*, between that sentiment, and their other religious opinions. But that you, Sir, should express the slightest tendency to such a sentiment, that you should embrace such a tenet, and deliver such a dogma, as the quotation from your own letter contains, must excite in every one, not only the highest degree of surprise, but likewise of astonishment. You, Sir, whose other principles and conduct are of such a kind, that not only such a sentiment, can never produce with them, the smallest effect of a *chemical solution*, but must by their mutual

tual repulsion burst the containing vessel. You, Sir, whose *theological* lucubrations are founded upon a maxim, the very *reverse* of this; I mean, the *actually unlearning*, as you advance into the winter of age, ALL that you were taught, in the season of youth.

It would be a curious speculation to investigate, and I doubt not but noble fruit, would be the reward of the labour, were any one to discover, from whence has arisen this inveterate prejudice of yours, in favour of the writers upon *government*, and your prejudice equally strong against the writers, upon the *New Testament*? What has made you, a thus open and declared *bigot* to the *infallibility* of LOCKE, and still more and more a *sceptic* as to the *authority* of CHRIST, and his APOSTLES? Surely we may apply to you the observation of Horace, "*nil fuit unquam tam impar sibi*;" for, without meaning to give you any offence, such a character must
be

be uncommon; and whatever is uncommon, usually excites our admiration.

But Sir, I can so easily conceive, that Mr. Burke may differ from Mr. Locke's principles in his treatise on government, without *forgetting* them, that I am utterly unable to conceive, how they can possibly be admitted by any one, who has been previously habituated to much thought and deep reflection, before he happens to read them, either in consequence of his own choice, or in obedience to the command of his tutor. That Mr. Locke, must always stand deservedly very high, in the temple of fame, it would be folly or injustice to deny. But, that he was *not* ALWAYS *clear* in his *first principles*, nor *right* in his *deductions* from them, even in ANY of his works, and *more particularly* in those, upon CIVIL GOVERNMENT, may be asserted with truth, because it is capable of demonstration. And I must confess, I was

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scarcely

scarcely ever more surpris'd in my life, when upon reading the ingenious "Essays," (entitled) *philosophical, historical, and moral*," I found the Author, I do not mean combating the lively remarks of *Soam Jenyns*, for they are more ludicrous, than convincing; but seriously defending Locke's notions; "THAT ALL MEN ARE BORN FREE," and also "EQUAL;" who at the same time, with so much ingenuity of observation, and force of argument, has refuted what he terms, "*the gross error*," and the "*egregious blunders*" of Dr. Price.

This supposed *natural freedom*, and *natural equality* of mankind, are the sources from which those NATURAL RIGHTS must be drawn, of which we hear so much, but have been taught so little; and which, when the modern great advocates for them, are urged to explain,—instead of defining,—they content themselves with only repeating the words

words over again,—without giving us the slightest elucidation of their meaning.

Now Sir, as YOU have NOT ventured yourself down the WELL, where, TRUTH is said to keep her residence at the bottom, and drawn up from thence, *first* principles for yourself; permit me for a time, to take my leave of you, and to accompany Mr. Locke, for whose abilities, I have the highest respect, though I am not, as you are, "*addictus jurare in verba Magistri.*"

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

P. S. You will, I hope, excuse the liberty I have taken, in transposing the order, in which, the names of LOCKE and HOADLEY, stand in your letter. For, though I have a great respect for high rank, I have,

a much greater veneration for superior genius; and therefore I did not choose, to put as you have done, the scholar before the master. LOCKE was certainly, a great genius, and though I am not disposed, in imitation of you and the Persians, to worship the sun;—yet, I consider the rays of Locke's genius, as collected into a focus in his writings, imparting light to Bishop Hoadley, —like, the beams of the heavenly luminary, concentrated in a convex glass,—kindling into a contention,—between blaze and smoke,—some of the *mere common stubble* of the field.

LETTER

 L E T T E R III.

SIR,

I Must beg leave to observe, that from the first moment of my tasting Mr. Locke's principles upon government, they never appeared to me, to have by any means the same flavour, with those which come from the well of truth. For when, having first carefully separated the ideas annexed, to the words,—“the *natural freedom and equality of mankind*,” from all the extraneous matter mixed with them, and we have put them into a well-closed alembic,—we shall find the *precipitation* to consist, only of this simple, insipid, *identical proposition*, as the Logicians term it. Viz. that *whilst* men live

live in a *state of nature*,—which is *prior* to the existence of what we call *civil government*, mens actions are not under any of *those* POLITICAL restraints, nor have men themselves *those distinctions* of station, which are *created*, when a government is established;—which is in fact, only to say,—that a state of nature, and a state of government, are *not one*, and the *same* state, but *different* ones:—And that the former is therefore, without all rules, laws, and regulations, which exist in the latter. Certainly no ghost was wanted to tell us this, because it is implied in the very DEFINITIONS of the TERMS. But, I cannot conceive in what *other* sense than the foregoing, it can be said, that “*men are born free*,” except it be in this,—which is as little to the purpose,—that NATURE, or more properly the GOD of NATURE, has endowed them with FREE-WILL, or a POWER of choosing one thing, in preference to another. This indeed,

is certainly very true, and is therefore admitted; but the sole question, relative to the NATURAL FREEDOM of mankind, is, his *natural* freedom, as to the REAL EXERCISE of the POWER of ACTING, in CONSEQUENCE of SUCH a CHOICE. And this, it is manifest, is much less in a *man's* power in a *state* of *nature*, than even in a *state* of *society*. And consequently his NATURAL, is for the most part less, than his POLITICAL freedom. For this is the very circumstance, which from the first exercise of reason, upon long continued experience, prompts men to unite together, and willingly to submit to any, even the *most burdensome restraints*, which the very *worst species* of *civil government*, can possibly lay upon them, as far preferable, to those evils, which they endured in that state of *anarchy*, called, a *state of nature*.

For, it may, with a much nearer approach to truth, be said, of almost any
other

other animal, that he is born to *act* as he chuses; than of MAN. Man being of all animals, *that, which* is, from the *necessities* of his nature in the greatest degree, and for the longest time, not merely *accidentally*, but even *necessarily* *subject* to the *authority*,—*will*,—and *controul* of it's parents; and which subjection continues in a state of nature even still longer, than in a state of society. But when he even becomes emancipated, from that subjection, is he not still liable to be thwarted in the indulgence of his wishes, and the execution of his intentions, by every one, and therefore *subject* to the controul of every one, who is either *stronger*, more *skilful*, or more *cunning* than himself? For will any one contend, that all men are *born*, and *continue* *equal* in these qualities; any more than in those of stature, staitness and beauty? In *what* *respect* then, can we find men *born* EQUAL? And consequently in what *other* sense, than in the quibbling kind of sense. (You will be
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so good as to remember the quibble is not mine, but Mr. Locke's,) which I have before mentioned, can they be said to be *born FREE*?

Besides, it is not only from each separate individual, who is stronger than himself, that a man's actions are liable to controul, in a *state of nature*; but likewise, from every designed, or casual *union* of those, who may *each* of them, be *individually* WEAKER.

For please to look into the country, and there see horses,—cows,—sheep,—and oxen,—turned into their different pastures;—even amongst them, you will find some *one*, of each species, at first trying his strength, and afterwards becoming lord, and master over the rest. If one alone however, should prove to be unequal to the conquest, you will behold then, *some* of the stronger,—by union with each other,—keep-

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ing the weaker at a distance,—and forcing them to be content,—with the very worst pasture in the field, whilst the tyrants feed where they please, and monopolize to themselves, the best and sweetest of the grass. Take a view of them some time afterwards,—when they have gorged themselves to the full, in the favourite spot,—and spoiled what they have not eaten,—you will then see them driving away the others from the place, where they had before permitted them to graze,—and for a time, will take possession of it for themselves. Just so, turn out *men* also, upon the great COMMON of nature, i. e. conceive them to be placed in a *state* of *nature*, and in what, will consist the difference of their conduct, from that of other animals? In nothing but this,—that in proportion,—as they have a greater ability, to contrive various means of gratifying their passions,—proud, covetous, and domineering over their species, as other animals may be;

MEN

MEN WILL BE,—still MORE haughty,—
MORE avaricious,—and MORE tyrannical.

Totally unacquainted therefore, with the FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT, do all those appear to me to be, who suppose it to be founded upon the HAPPINESS, arising from this NATURAL *freedom*, and NATURAL *equality* of mankind, if any can be guilty of such an abuse of words, as so to call them. Consequently therefore most egregiously mistaken must they be, who in the most crab-like, and retrograde procedure, are continually measuring back, the RELATIVE PERFECTION of each government; by the degrees of it's approximation, to man's imagined ORIGINAL FREEDOM, and EQUALITY in a *state of nature*.

Where then are we to find, that root of NATURAL RIGHTS, from which, we have been told, the trunk and branches

of all good governments, must originally derive, their sturdy vigour, and umbrageous shade.

Perhaps it will be urged, in defence of Mr. Locke; for you are not *singular* in preferring the *authority* of a *name*, to the *force* of an *argument*;—that though it may be granted,—that such is the turbulence, and violence of a *state of nature*, that in it, man cannot be said to be *born* indeed, to the *actual exercise* of freedom; yet nevertheless, he may be truly said, to be born with a RIGHT to freedom of action, in consequence of his free-will.

But, this, is only the same as to say, in other words, that all men have a RIGHT upon all occasions, when they choose it, to do wrong,—though, all men when they choose it, have a RIGHT to prevent it. For, if every man has a right to every thing he *CHOOSSES*, then it follows, that
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every man has a *right* to hurt, or kill every man, when he chooses; though every man choosing *not* to be hurt, or killed, has an equal *right* to resist. If this be not NON-SENSE, I must confess, I know not, WHAT IS. So that at last, all this cloud of dust, which has been raised by the puffing advocates, for the NATURAL RIGHTS OF MEN, settles into this, *identical* proposition, only that man in a state of nature, *can* do a thing, when he has a *power to do it*: or that when he is *not controuled*, he is *free to act*.

For, suppose a man in a state of nature, should attempt to perform an action, which, a stronger man than he, FORBIDS him to do, upon pain of losing his life; —what LAW,—what AUTHORITY,—what RULE,—what PRESCRIPTION,—what PERMISSION, can the weaker plead, for doing it? If, for instance; as he is about to carry home the animal, which he himself
had

had killed in the chase, another who is stronger, and has been hunting with him, chuses to take it from him, what PLEA of RIGHT can the former use? If he should urge, that he is hungry, the latter may use exactly the same plea. If the one plead his labour, and danger in going out in pursuit of it; the other may plead, his equal labour and danger in both these circumstances. If the one, plead his RIGHT to it, from KILLING it; the other may with just as much reason, claim it on the plea, of his VICTORY, in TAKING it from him. For, if, he who killed it, urge as a plea, that it is his PROPERTY, because he killed it; then, this assertion is either absurd, or must imply some CONVENTION; and consequently, some SPECIES of GOVERNMENT amongst certain persons; who, have *agreed* to suffer every one to enjoy *unmolested*, the prey, which *he* himself has *killed*. For without such a *convention*, NO PROPERTY can possibly exist; and consequently

quently therefore NO RIGHT, previous to some league or covenant between men, which some have agreed to adhere to, and to support, by some *common* FORCE, against any infringement;—which union constitutes a species of *government*. From nature then, men may have POSSESSIONS; but it is from GOVERNMENT alone, they can derive their CLAIM to them,—as RIGHTS.

I too well know already, and I fear I shall experience it yet more fully, how extremely difficult, it is so far to *overcome* men's PREPOSSESSIONS, much more, to conquer their PREJUDICES, so as to make them, *accurately*, and *clearly* to discern, the GROUNDS and PRINCIPLES of this reasoning; because, from infancy they learn, to conceive the *practices*, and *principles*, which are most *common* in a state of government, and society, to have universally existed, *previous* to that state. Few, very few, being disposed to give themselves

felves the trouble of labouring up to the sources of *that* NILE, from which, such rules and practises spring. Though even, a poet, I mean, Horace, in his *third satire*, might with the aid of a little of their own reflection, have taught them better. The passage begins, "quum prorepserunt primis animalia terris." The whole is too long to transcribe, and I shall therefore refer you for the remainder, either to the book, or to your own memory.

From these premises, then, it necessarily follows; that *before*, we can with any PROPRIETY, TALK OF RIGHTS, we must first suppose, some CLEAR and DEFINITE RULE of action; by some means, or other, to EXIST. For, we can no more say, that *any* act is RIGHT, OR WRONG, without the existence of a RULE OF CONDUCT, with which we can COMPARE it; than we can say, a thing is STRAIT OR CROOKED, without MEASURING it, by some LINE, either

either sensible, or imaginary. But in a MERE STATE OF NATURE, who has authority to lay down a rule; by an adherence to which, or aberration from it, MEN'S ACTIONS are to be denominated, either RIGHT, or WRONG? The mere supposition of the existence of such an authority; is totally irreconcilable with, contradictory, and opposite to the very ideas, which are comprehended, under the words,—“A STATE OF NATURE.”

For, where, such an *authority* is; there likewise *some government* is; and, if, this authority be in a single man, whether it be vested in him, by others, or usurped by himself, HE is a MONARCH. If it be maintained, that though there may be no AUTHORITY, to command obedience to them, yet, SUCH RULES may be established by MUTUAL AGREEMENT. We may answer, what does it avail, to lay down a rule, or rules of conduct, which, no man, is

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COMPELLABLE TO OBEY; because, no man has power to enforce them. For, if you go on further, and suppose; that they may, by a mutual compact, *determine* to PUNISH any, who transgress the rules, to which they have agreed; you once more return to a supposition, absolutely repugnant, to the very idea of a *state of nature*; as this, likewise supposes a *government* to *exist*; the species of which, is wholly popular, or in some measure, partaking of the republican, oligarchical, or aristocratical forms.

What therefore, in a STATE OF NATURE, can possibly give the impulse to men's actions, (the *lawful authority* of the parent, and *accidental compulsion* of another excepted) but the FIRST PRINCIPLES of our nature; our *instincts*, *appetites*, *desires*, *passions*; and the *conclusions* of our *reason*, as to the *choice*, of the respective indulgence of them, in any particular case? For the
sake

fake of the RECTITUDE, of what RULE, then, can men by any MOTIVE be induced, to FOREGO, their own indulgence in any desire they can gratify; though they should even take from another, an object of gratification; which had been ever so long in his possession?

If such, be the *natural*, and *equal* freedom of all mankind; it is absurd, to talk of *rights*, in such a state; because, it is only a state of *licence*, to every man, to do hurt to every man, where, his *power* can second his *inclination*.

But, you Sir, and some others, will perhaps readily say, that the question I have asked, in the foregoing paragraph, is surely very easily resolved: even, without the necessity of supposing the existence of ANY RULE, to direct men, but merely, by that very FACULTY of REASON; which I do not deny, but even have admitted to exist, in such a state.

I am sorry however, to say, that such an answer, would betray a total ignorance, of the *meaning* of the PRINCIPAL TERM, which it contains. For, one would think, as it is here employed, and as indeed, we hear, and see numbers, every day, applying it; that REASON was a *weapon* bestowed upon us, by which, we can, at any time subdue the instincts, desires, inclinations, and passions of our nature; like a club, in the hand of a savage; by which, he may knock down, the beasts of the forest. Whereas in truth, the POWER of REASON, as it relates to our conduct, is nothing else, but that FACULTY, with which, nature has endowed us, to COMPARE the several modes of pleasure, and pain, with each other, which instigate us to action; and, so to enable us, to discern, from memory of our past experience, which mode in every instance, surpasses the rest; or how each of which, exceeds the other, in DURATION, and INTENSITY, COMBI-

NED.

NED. When, we make this *comparison*, then, we are said to *reason*; and, if we choose, the acquisition of that pleasure, or the avoidance of that pain, which upon such an estimate, is, the *greatest*; we are said to have made a *rational* choice; or, to *act rationally*. But, whilst men then, have only their instincts, appetites, and passions, to urge them on to action; when no *moral science* exists; when no *law*, nor *rule of action* is instituted, for the direction of man's conduct;—REASON is of *no use* to man, but, to enable him, to *choose* out of those *instincts*, *appetites*, and *passions*, that, to which in any particular case, he should give the preference to follow; REASON being furnished (in the case supposed) only with the objects of those instincts, &c. out of which, it can direct the will to choose.

Thus for instance, a man may indeed, be sometimes restrained, from forcibly seiz-
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ing something in the possession of another, by *dread* of the superior strength of the individual, at the moment of an open attack; or deterred, from privately taking it away, by *fear* of a speedy or a lingering REVENGE. For, a STATE OF NATURE, is only a CONTINUED scene of CONTENTION, from OPPOSING PASSIONS.

But then, though he may certainly here, very properly be said to *reason*; yet, what constitutes his *reasoning*, but, the making a *comparison* between the desired good, and the apprehended evil? And, what results from his reasoning in this case, or is the conclusion of reason, in respect to his conduct in this particular instance? Nothing but this,—that the action is better avoided, —because, the probability of his incurring pain by such an action, is greater, than the probability of the acquisition of pleasure: or, that the *risk* of suffering the one, is a greater evil, than the *chance* of enjoying the other, is a good.

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Will you then, Sir, who are not only the disciple of Mr. Locke upon government, but have professed to receive HIS OPINIONS AS AXIOMS, maintain the EXISTENCE of certain "INNATE MORAL PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES?" You may perhaps, advance so far, in defence of that supposition, and certainly with as much *consistency* as Mr. Locke has gone, as to say,—*because*, HE has said it;—"that NO "MAN, has a RIGHT over the LIFE or "LIBERTY of another, or to hurt him in "any respect whatsoever, unless, that *other*, "has *done* SOME HURT to him."

These words, to be sure in themselves, are no *bad sounding words*; but WHAT is their MEANING? Unless you can show, that the *man himself*, has a RIGHT to his LIFE and LIBERTY in a state, where, NO LAWS for GOVERNING OUR PASSIONS exist? For otherwise, they contain only this *identical* proposition; that the *one* man has
certainly

certainly NO RIGHT to take them away, because,—NO RIGHT of ANY KIND WHATSOEVER, EXISTS. But it is as certain, therefore, that the other upon this ground, can PLEAD NO RIGHT to KEEP them, and consequently, that though the other, inflicts pain, he does NO WRONG IN TAKING THEM AWAY.

But, even to make out the PROOF of this RIGHT, on the one part, and the WRONG on the other, you perhaps may think to be a most easy task. For, so early, was such a notion, instilled into us at first, and so continually has it been inculcated into us ever since, that I doubt not, but many, who do not deem it to be an innate notion, think it to be a self-evident proposition. You will probably therefore, think it sufficient to say, that a man's LIFE and LIBERTY are HIS RIGHTS,—because they are HIS;—they are HIS OWN;—they are HIS PROPERTY;—he is in POS-

SESSION of them;—they can not be TAKEN from him WITHOUT FORCE;—because, NATURE has GIVEN them to him, and a thousand such expreffions, with which we find the advocates for the *natural rights* of men adorned; flrung together like the beaded ornaments of favages, which, like them too, have only an accidental junction, but no natural coherence.

For, Sir, the question ftill returns, where, is the *intermediate propofition*, or definition, which makes RIGHT and POSSESSION in this cafe, fynonymous terms. NATURE has given trees, and ftones, poffeffion, of fome part of the ground; but is a man guilty of any violation of the RIGHTS of thofe objects, when he *cuts down a tree, or, forces a ftone to afcend, contrary to it's nature, into the air.*

But thefe, perhaps you will fay, are cafes totally diffimilar, becaufe there is NO

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PAIN

PAIN produced, in depriving the latter, of what nature gave them; as there is in the former case supposed. True Sir. Why suppose then, that a man in a state of nature, sees an horse, or a deer, or both, running wild; and by some stratagem he catches them: he certainly immediately deprives them both of their liberty. Suppose then further, that he keeps the one as his slave,—to lighten his own labour, or,—to give him pleasure; and that he kills the other for food,—to gratify his appetite of hunger. Will you be so good, as to tell me, whether he does wrong? If, you, and I can be once convinced, that he does,—I am sure, that neither of us, shall, ever again taste any meat, nor ever more mount on horseback, whatever mortification, from the abstinence, we might sustain. Now, Sir, in this case, there is PAIN produced, as well as in the case before supposed; and the horse's, and deer's *lives*, and *liberties*,—were as much *theirs*,—as much *their own*,—as much *their property*

ty,—they were as much in *possession* of them,—they had them as much from *nature*, as the man had his. If then, for *these* reasons,—life and liberty were the MAN'S NATURAL RIGHTS,—why are they not equally the NATURAL RIGHTS of the horse and the deer,—the wolf and the lamb, the fox and the chicken, the dog and the cat; and why is it therefore not as WRONG, to kill even a MOUSE,—as a MAN? Be so good, as to *forget* for a moment, that you ever read the BOOK of GENESIS, and then show me, by what *single* principle, or *concatenation* of propositions, it follows, that a MAN has a RIGHT to every thing, which nature gave,—of which the deprivation, would give him pain.— I must once more tell you,—that I mean, PRIOR to every institution of laws, and government.

For a man to say, that as I should feel pain myself in such a case, therefore,

I will not inflict the pain upon another, but will rather suffer the pain, or inconvenience, I shall myself sustain, from not gratifying my desire, to take away his life and liberty ;—would be very excellently humane, and benevolent reasoning, and would apply to all beings, endowed with *sensation*. But this proves not the RIGHT of the ANIMAL, or of the ONE MAN, but only the FORBEARANCE of the OTHER.

Again, suppose he should say, that I am so constituted by nature, that I can not give pain to another sensitive being, without the rebound of some pain upon myself ;—therefore I will not be the cause of pain to others? This would certainly evince in him, great sympathy and compassion. But his conduct then would not be founded, upon any sense of the RIGHTS of OTHERS, but upon SELF-LOVE, arising from the consideration of his own susceptibility to pain, under such particular circumstances.

ces. But suppose, his desire of some gratification, which he would enjoy, in consequence of his depriving another of his life and liberty, *fully to overbalance* that pain, which is the offspring of compassion, what would then remain, to *restrain* him?

And as I am at present, in the interrogatory humour of Socrates, I must beg leave to ask further, WHAT CONSTITUTES it MORE the RIGHT of ONE man, to enjoy the pleasures, resulting from the LIFE and LIBERTY, which nature gave him, than of the OTHER, to enjoy the PLEASURE, which results from the gratification of his DESIRES; which, nature likewise gave him? The question therefore, still remains unanswered. And indeed, could it be *satisfactorily* answered, this is only a *leading* question, to *that*,—which is the precise one in the instance, I have supposed, and quoted from Mr. Locke. For in *that*, the SAME MAN is in *two different cases*, in possession of

of his *life* and *liberty*. In the one of which, the man is conceived to have suffered *no hurt* from the other; in the other case, he is supposed, to *have received one*. The real question therefore is, and I beg you will particularly observe it, WHAT CONSTITUTES HIS RIGHT TO KEEP his life and liberty, where he has done the other NO HURT; and what CONSTITUTES the RIGHT of the *other*, to TAKE THEM AWAY, where, he has?

For my own part, Sir, I have thought long and much upon it; and can find no leading idea, no separating, nor connecting principle in the two cases. And as I am not prone, to *take* a proposition *for granted*, because, another man, whatever may be his reputation, affirms it; I must beg, as the condition, of my assent, even to a proposition of Mr. Locke's, neither his, nor your WORDS; but either your's, or some other person's bond of

PROOF.

PROOF. I can however assure you, that in vain will you search for one, in the works of *Grotius*, *Puffendorf*, *Barbeyrac*, *Burlamaqui*, or, of any later writer upon government.

In vain likewise, will you, or even any society in this kingdom, however large in numbers, or dignified in rank and abilities, address the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY of *France* for instruction, upon this most fundamental point. They, having already published, in their *declaration of rights*,—all they know, upon this subject; and which has with high encomiums, been more than once most sedulously disseminated, throughout the kingdom. To those indeed, who love to walk in a mist, because, the vapours, by confounding the outlines of things, serve to magnify the objects; *their declaration* must be most highly, and most gratefully acceptable. For do but attend once more, Sir, to what I do not doubt, you have often
before

before read ; I mean *this declaration of rights*, which we are informed, holds out to the world, "*instruction, of great consequence to civil government, and founded upon GREAT AUTHORITY, being agreed to by the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY of France, and sanctioned by the KING.*" I will only detain you, by transcribing, two of these "*simple and incontestible principles,*" as they have been called, and making a short comment upon them, they having the most intimate connection with the question, now before us, and besides having had the high honour, of being *selected*, to form a *basis*, for the rest.

"Men were BORN, and ALWAYS CONTINUE FREE, and EQUAL, in respect of their RIGHTS: civil distinction THEREFORE," (*which must render men unfree, and unequal*) "can be founded only on PUBLIC UTILITY," (*which is to say therefore in other words, that these natural rights*
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of men, are incompatible with PUBLIC UTILITY.)

“The end of all POLITICAL associations, “IS the PRESERVATION of the NATURAL “and IMPRESCRIPTIBLE RIGHTS of man;” (*which therefore according to the foregoing declaration; civil distinctions, for the sake of PUBLIC UTILITY, take away*) and those RIGHTS, are LIBERTY, PROPERTY, SECURITY, and RESISTANCE OF OPPRESSION. *But all these imprescriptible rights as they are called, the very institution of government, and of laws, is intended to PRESCRIBE.*

OH LEPIDUM CAPUT!

That the end, of all *political associations*, is to preserve to men, liberty, property, security, and resistance of oppression, to a *certain degree*, and not to destroy them, as the *national assembly* has done,—is indeed true; and will be presently proved. But, this is,—by CONSTITUTING them to BE

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the RIGHTS of men, under a state of government, which, were NOT RIGHTS, in a state of nature.

These self-taught legislators therefore you see, hold not out to you, the least assistance towards the solution of this almost *Sphinxian Enigma*, with which you are puzzled. For the *national assembly*, you find, an assembly of *philosophers*, undoubtedly as they are, have certainly adopted the easiest, though not that, which either Plato, or Aristotle would have thought the *best* mode of instruction,—the taking,—I mean, a proposition for granted,—instead of proving it.

Yet, so licentious are our public prints become, as to maintain, for I lately myself read the assertion in the news-papers, that the *framer* of this *luminous DECLARATION, OF RIGHTS*, is *undoubtedly* the *WISEST MAN* in FRANCE. Ought not such calumniators to be punished, for publishing
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so scandalous a LIBEL on the UNDER-
STANDINGS, of THE WHOLE FRENCH
NATION.

Having now spun out the thread of this epistle, as I trust, to a reasonable length, and having proposed to you, a subject best fitted for the retirement of your study, and the silence of meditation; it will I apprehend, be most proper, here to conclude this letter. For, would but the generality of authors, change their hours allotted to reading and to thinking, into the *inverse ratio* of that, which they most commonly bear to each other; the world would soon be delivered from those great evils,—great books. And students then, at once receiving the precious ore, pure and defecated, would no longer either sweat under the fatigue of clearing away the dross, or be covered, or choked with it's dust.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

L E T T E R IV.

SIR,

THOUGH I have often maintained, and must always think, that how much soever a man may BELIEVE, he can never possibly KNOW any thing, of which, he has NEVER DOUBTED; yet as I am also persuaded, that a constant state of *scepticism*, is the worst of all the chronic maladies, which can afflict the human mind; I am now eager to offer myself as your physician, to deliver you from that irksome state, in which I left you, at the conclusion of my last letter. For, though some portion, or potion, of *scepticism*, is sometimes as necessary to keep the mind in a constant habit

habit of health and vigour, as a cathartic is sometimes beneficial to the body; yet, scepticism, which is, as it were, a mental diarrhœa, must like the bodily one, infallibly end in debility, and dissolution. I hope however, this allusion will not give offence, either to your delicacy, or to the nice olfactory senses of others, in this refined age. Because, I must confess, that 'till a new art of criticism be written, I cannot discover, either high or low, why mean allusions are not as properly suited to low things; as the *loftiest* similitudes, are to the highest subjects.

Now Sir, though I can not possibly attempt to show you, why LIFE and LIBERTY are more the NATURAL RIGHTS of MEN, than of HORSES, and where that intermediate *idea* exists, which makes them so, after which, we have been so long enquiring, but have never found; yet I can very easily find, and inform you of
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the mistake, which led Mr. Locke into this maze of error. A discovery, certainly next in it's importance, to the discovery of the object itself. Because it will save mankind in future, from the fruitless labour, of darkly and ignorantly hunting round and round, in search of an object, which has no existence; and the dispute, upon NATURAL RIGHTS, will no longer oscillate, upon a mere fluctuating argument *ad ignorantiam*; but, will be fixed for ever, upon the immoveable point of real science.

That *some* men in a *state of nature*, would indeed take away another's life and liberty, in ONE of the cases supposed by Mr. Locke, who would *not* do it in the other; is a clear and indisputable fact. But, that they would do this, without either knowing or thinking about NATURAL RIGHTS, is infinitely more evident, than any of his *axioms*, to which you so readily

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ly give your assent, and, which you deem it criminal in others, to doubt.

For the NATURE of MAN is so CONSTITUTED, that the passions of ANGER, HATRED, and REVENGE, naturally spring up in him, upon any attempt of another, either to inflict upon him any pain, or to deprive him of any pleasure, is likewise certain beyond contradiction. But, if THESE be the MOTIVES of HIS action, in the case supposed, who has really SUFFERED PAIN from another; then, he NO MORE deprives that other of his LIFE and LIBERTY, from a SENSE of RIGHT, than the OTHER, inflicted the PRIOR PAIN upon THAT PRINCIPLE;—BOTH acting EQUALLY from their passions or appetites. The one perhaps, to acquire a pleasure not before possessed, the other to gratify revenge for a loss sustained.

No doubt, wise, is the provision of nature, by which we are furnished with such

a passion, as REVENGE, though the exercise of it, often brings great evils upon mankind. But, equally wise likewise, is that provision, of nature, which furnishes us with other PASSIONS and DESIRES; which produce also many evils, by urging men to wish for, and to attempt to take away the possessions of others. But, so FAR are the PASSIONS THEMSELVES, or even the *respective* STRENGTH of *different* passions, FROM CONSTITUTING a RIGHT to THAT, which they prompt us to desire, that in order for the very BIRTH and ESTABLISHMENT of RIGHTS; RULES OR LAWS, are made to SUBDUE the ONE, and to CONSTITUTE the other, which laws, are not the offspring of PASSION, but of REASON. And the PRINCIPLE which furnishes men with the power of reasoning upon this point, and drawing out deductions, is the CONCLUSION, which experience has taught them, from the endurance of past evils, of the utility, and even NECESSITY there is, for the

the institution of a government, and the establishment of laws, so as to constitute it, the RIGHT of a GOVERNOR, to PUNISH any one, who HURTS another; in order to PREVENT the actual EXERCISE of that VERY PASSION, by which, *Mr. Locke* says, every man has a RIGHT to PUNISH another, and in consequence of which, the life of man had been, but one continued scene of reciprocal infliction, and suffering of wounds, pain, and death.

In a country indeed, where, the WILL of GOD had been made known to the inhabitants, directly by REVELATION, or where, by a revelation to one nation, some knowledge of it had been transfused to another by *tradition*, not only of the existence of a God, and some religious worship or other,—which most countries have;—but likewise, of HIS WILL, with regard to MEN'S CONDUCT TO EACH OTHER,—of which, all people in a STATE OF

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NATURE

NATURE, must have been always ignorant, without the inestimable benefit, either of such a revelation, or such a tradition,—THEY might indeed have CONCEIVED and TALKED of RIGHTS, and had a groundwork, upon which, they might have pleaded them. But, if instead of imagining cases, which never existed, but in some few particular instances, we have recourse to true history, and real fact,—we shall learn,—that the FIRST RIGHTS known to men, are those, which had their origin, from *some species* of GOVERNMENT, however imperfect it might be; and it follows therefore as a consequence, that *government* is *not* founded upon PRIOR RIGHTS; but that IT only, actually by LAWS, delivered either orally, or in writing, CONVERTS THOSE POSSESSIONS INTO PROPERTY, and INTO RIGHTS; which, had before no OTHER TENURE, than that uncertain and precarious one, which was at all times, subject to DISSOLUTION from the LUSTS, APPETITES,

APPETITES, STRENGTH, VIOLENCE, and
FORCE OF OTHERS.

Harraffed and fatigued, with so miserable a state of existence, as this, OF NATURE, especially, when men having forsaken the hunting and fishing states, were brought into a nearer intercourse with each other, by pastoral, and agricultural occupations, they resolved to terminate it, by searching out some remedy, against the continuance of these evils. This they effected, *first*, perhaps by providing a security against the external violence, they sustained from other men, whose huts, or habitations, were at some distance from them; and who would frequently by surprise, in one night, extirpate, or enslave, almost all the inhabitants of a wide extended district. *Secondly*, likewise, to guard themselves from the equally bad consequences, which arose from the more frequent evils, produced by the unrestrained

exercise of the passions, of those, who lived in a closer vicinity with each other. From these slight sketches, the first rude frame of a government was formed. Some by choice determining, and others, by necessity being compelled, to submit to the government, or controul, of some one man to direct them; who was either selected by others, or who having from some cause or other, acquired such authority amongst them, that they quietly submitted to his assumption of the rule, and command over them.

From these PREMISES, then, it NECESSARILY FOLLOWS, that the office of the governor, was, by uniting them in a body, to lead them out to war, to repel the attacks of distant enemies; and by laying down laws, for the regulation of their conduct, and by the power of punishment, intrusted in his hands,—to deter all the members of the several families, which by
their

their union, formed the state, from interrupting each other, in the USE and PEACE-ABLE ENJOYMENT, of their RESPECTIVE ACQUISITIONS, except in such cases, as the governor thought necessary for the public good.

Such were the views, without doubt, with which men associated together, and such were the ends, which they proposed.

They, certainly did NOT unite into society, and form a government, for the purpose of ACTING WITHOUT RESTRAINT, according to the *volitions*, and *determinations* of their own *passions*, *inclinations*, *caprice*, or *fancy*, or even the CONCLUSIONS, OF EACH MAN'S SEPARATE REASON. For on the contrary, the very purpose of their associating together, was to ESCAPE FROM THE EVILS OF SUCH A STATE, where, ALL WERE MISERABLE, FROM EACH MAN'S ACTING ACCORDING TO HIS OWN WILL,

WITHOUT

WITHOUT THE CURB OF SOME COMMON CONTROUL. But, they united into society, and formed a GOVERNMENT, by giving authority TO ONE MAN, TO PREVENT the EXERCISE OF SUCH FREE-WILL, and TO PROVIDE SUCH A CONTROUL; by COMPELLING THEM TO SUBMIT TO SUCH GENERAL LAWS, AS HIS REASON should devise, and HIS POWER should enforce.

From the foregoing reasoning, then the CONCLUSION IS EVIDENT;—that if any ONE, or any NUMBER of individuals, set up (in such government as that, whose formation I have been describing) HIS, or THEIR wills, in OPPOSITION to the WILL of the LEGISLATOR, HE OR THEY are GUILTY of the GREATEST of ALL crimes, they can possibly commit. Because, it is a crime, which dissolves at once, the whole cement of society, and snaps asunder by violence, all the bonds of government, which tend to secure to the WHOLE,—

PEACE

PEACE and TRANQUILITY. For OPPOSITION to the WILL of the LEGISLATOR, tends to drive them back, to that MISERABLE STATE OF NATURE, from which, they gladly fled to GOVERNMENT, as to a REFUGE and an ASYLUM. And hence it was, that *Socrates*, who was esteemed in Greece, as the wisest of the sons of men, however he may be now *despised* by the *philosophers* of modern days, submitted *cheerfully* to die, in obedience to the laws, of a *tyrannic republic*, as such there may be, however strange, such a notion may appear to modern politicians. For notwithstanding *he* was unjustly condemned by his judges, he was nobly inflexible to all the entreaties, and great and generous pains, taken by his friends, to persuade him to escape. To the honour of *Athens* however, it ought ever to be remembered, that soon after his death, the citizens were sincerely sorry, and truly penitent, for the injustice and cruelty, with which they had treated him; having been
seduced

seduced by the flimsy, but cruel misrepresentations of a comic wit,—the mean envy, or still meaner self-interest of eloquent sophists.—The contagious corruption of a turbulent faction,—and the furious phrenzy of a popular assembly.

It was then, from the *institution* of a *government*, that there *first* arose in those, who had not the WILL of GOD revealed to them,—IDEAS OF RIGHTS and WRONGS, of OBLIGATION and DUTY, of MERIT and DEMERIT, between men in *general*, who were not bound to each other, by the ligaments of nature. By those *ligaments* I mean, the *instincts*, and *affections* of the mind, which reciprocally bind parents to children,—husbands to wives,—brothers to sisters,—friends to friends,—and in general,—the person obliged to his benefactor. These AFFECTIONS indeed, must in SOME DEGREE, ALWAYS exist in every state of human nature; whether they be, or be not under
any

before mentioned) 'till there was some OBLIGATION;—and there could be,—NO OBLIGATION, 'till,—there was SOME ONE, who had a POWER by some motive, to OBLIGE another to do an act; and 'till there was another,—who was OBLIGED by that motive,—to OBEY. Men could be entitled to NO MERIT, nor DEMERIT from their conduct, 'till,—there was some LAW, in consequence of which, they were by a NON-COMPLIANCE, with it, ENTITLED to BLAME, or some OTHER PUNISHMENT; or which, by holding out REWARDS, as the consequence of a CONFORMITY with it, ENTITLED them to, or made them MERIT, or DESERVE praise, or some other reward. Yet evident as such a conclusion, must be to every mind, habituated to deep thought; what admired systems, of what is called, PHILOSOPHY have we seen, which place the existence of the ideas annexed to these words, for want of an accurate analysis of their meaning, anterior,

terior, though certainly they are subsequent to the formation of all laws, rules of actions, rewards, and punishments. And thus it happens, that many a fair, splendid, and beautiful system, when the meaning of the words, which form the fundamental proposition of the whole fabric, are so examined as to be clearly ascertained, tumble into pieces, and leaves it's fragments, as some memorial of it's author's genius, but, at the same time, of his fruitless labour, and his misapplied application.

THESE are the PRINCIPLES then, from which originates the RIGHT of the GOVERNOR to COMMAND; and, also the DUTY of the GOVERNED to OBEY. To the former, in the case I have just stated, as their LEGISLATOR, they have entrusted, not only the POWER, but the RIGHT of JUDGING for them, what actions each man is to perform, so as to act consistently with the GENERAL GOOD of the whole.

And this too without any contract,—direct or implied,—any stipulation,—or condition of any RESISTANCE whatsoever, in any case whatsoever, when any number, few or many, the minority, or majority, should happen to think differently from the legislator, and not deem a law conducive to private, or public good. A trust which however LIABLE TO ABUSE, arose, from men's experience of the evils, which they sustained, whilst EACH individual acted according to the PRIVATE determination of his OWN WILL.

If therefore, the subjects attempt, by FORCE to defend themselves, from submission to the governor's authority, they certainly can not plead any RIGHT to do it, but are JUSTLY said,—to REBEL,—OR TO MAKE WAR again; and the governor, has consequently a RIGHT to SUBDUE them by a superior force, for invading HIS RIGHT, and every OTHER MAN'S RIGHT, as a member of the society.

For

For such a resistance, is an attempt to DISSOLVE and ANNIHILATE the GOVERNMENT itself; and to involve their fellow subjects once more, in all the ANARCHY, MISERY and CONFUSION, which attend upon A STATE OF NATURE. An attempt, which not only constitutes a FOLLY of the greatest magnitude; but a CRIME likewise of the deepest dye. For, *that* one act of criminality, which tends to pluck up the whole happiness, and existence of the society by the roots, must necessarily IMPLICATE in it's PERPETRATION, the UNITED FLAGITIOUSNESS OF EVERY OTHER CRIME.

If, the truth of these premises be denied, and I well know, that, on account of men's *prepossessions*, and *prejudices*, they will with the utmost difficulty be admitted; let *such*, however reflect a moment upon the absurdity, in which, they necessarily involve themselves. For from the denial
of

of these principles, it will follow, that NO INSTITUTION of GOVERNMENT can POSSIBLY SUBSIST. As the *very* DEFINITION of the WORD, "GOVERNMENT," IMPLIES, and consequently, the *very* ESSENCE of the THING, MUST CONSIST, in the PEOPLE'S SUBMISSION, to the authority of ONE OR MORE PERSONS; as it's DIFFERENT FORMS, may happen to VARY. Which is the same as to say, in other words,—that ALL the other members of the community, are BOUND to SUBMIT to HIS OR THEIR JUDGMENT, as to what general laws are to be made, to direct each individual, what actions he is to perform, for the GOOD of the SOCIETY.

If then, the legislature, *should enact* such laws, as any number of them, even MUCH MORE than the MAJORITY, may in their own opinion, think have a direct contrary tendency; they can have no RIGHT, nor LEGAL means of opposing them, except

cept it may be by an humble representation, of their own opinions. But, if the laws be not repealed in consequence of such a petition, nothing is left to the petitioners, but either quietly to acquiesce, in the determination of the legislature, or to withdraw themselves from that state, and put themselves under the protection of another. For they, can not possibly set forth any RIGHT whatsoever, on which, they can build any CLAIM to OPPOSE the laws by FORCE; because, SUCH a CLAIM would be a DEMOLITION *of the* WHOLE COMPACT of society; which is,—that the subjects agreed to SUBMIT to the will and JUDGMENT of the LEGISLATURE; NOT,—that the GOVERNOR'S and LEGISLATOR'S will, should submit to THEIRS.

As these principles, Sir, however manifestly true, or evidently beautiful they may be, in themselves, or however good, and wholesome may be their fruits, (for according

according to the *platonick philosophy*, TRUTH, BEAUTY, and GOOD, are ONE) yet, as I am afraid, that they will notwithstanding, seem very *unpalatable* to you, I shall by terminating this letter, once more leave you time, to chew upon them the cud of reflection.

I need not, I dare to say, to assure you, that they will never be *clearly comprehended* by any one; 'till he has learned ACCURATELY to distinguish, between the *true* and *vulgar* application of WORDS to THINGS; and is able to place the IDEAS DIVESTED of THE WORDS, in their natural shapes, colours and dimensions, before the *orbit*, and *pupil* of his INTELLECT.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R V.

SIR,

I Have now, given you an opportunity of taking what time you please, for concocting the FIRST PRINCIPLES OF ALL GOVERNMENT; if, *satiety* occasioned by the dishes, which *Mr. Locke* had served up upon this occasion, has not excited in you, such an antipathy, as to produce an aversion even to *their* taste.

These principles, are certainly not fashionable; and therefore not being popular, can not at present, be of any use to any
M *artist,*

artist, in *book-making*; except, by the opportunity they afford of manufacturing some wares for sale, in *opposition* to them. For when once an age is enlightened by the splendor of book-making, and has imbibed it's genuine spirit; the merit of a work must always be estimated, according to the valuation of Hudibras, who asks,

For what is worth in any thing?

then answers,

But so much money as 'twill bring.

But whether you will with all the pertinacity of bigotry, resolve to adhere to whatever *Mr. Locke* has *told*,—for he certainly has not *taught* it, you; either by a refusal of further examination, and a maintenance of it against conviction; or, will begin to think with Socrates, that there is no season of a man's life, too late for the acquisition of fresh knowledge, by exploring and searching after truth, to whatever distance, the investigation may lead;—is yours to choose,

choose, not mine to dictate. But, if you be disposed to make such an enquiry, that nothing may be omitted by me, which may at all tend to facilitate your progress:—I shall beg leave, now, to remove two OBJECTIONS;—which might perhaps otherwise, not only obstruct you in your road, but even, perhaps, prevent your acquisition, of the object of your pursuit.

For, you may possibly imagine, in the FIRST place,—that, what I have assigned, as the VERY FIRST principles of ALL GOVERNMENT, can at most, be only the SECONDARY propositions, founded upon *some*, which were either *prior* to them in existence; or which, though posterior, as to discovery,—either supersede them by their importance, or destroy them by their contrariety.

SECONDLY, you may perhaps conceive, that however clear, and evident, the truth of

those PRINCIPLES, which I have advanced, appear to be; yet, they must necessarily be limited in their extent, to a *certain degree*. For you will probably urge, that if we trace out the conclusions, which *unavoidably* follow from them,—it is necessary,—that we should *reject* the *principles*, in their *utmost latitude*; from fear, of the danger, which would result from their CONSEQUENCES. As you will perhaps, under this *second head*, assert, that upon these principles,—OBEDIENCE, is as much due to the WORST, as to the BEST government in the world,—which, YOU will *deem* to be absurd: and that the cruellest acts, of the most DESPOTIC TYRANT, are to be by them JUSTIFIED, upon the ground of RIGHT;—which you will justly condemn as IMMORAL.

As to the FORMER OBJECTION, it is certainly founded upon PROPOSITIONS, which, have occasioned all the difficulty, confusion,

confusion, and perplexity, in which the NATURE of government, has been hitherto involved; and which have veiled it in the thickest mist of cimmerian darkness.

But, upon an attentive examination, it will be found, that the objection is wholly grounded upon an error, which,—though very common,—is,—yet so gross,—as that,—of MISTAKING,—an EFFECT,—for it's CAUSE.

Clearly and fully however, to demonstrate this, I must beg leave, to trace out the ORIGIN and foundation of ALL MORAL PRINCIPLES.

A subject, upon which, I apprehend my opinions will be thought, to differ more from those of *former* writers, than any position which has hitherto been advanced, upon the FIRST PRINCIPLES of government. Notwithstanding therefore, *both* have the

the most indissoluble connection, and are inseparably interwoven with each other, I must entreat you, Sir, and every one else, who *really wishes* to UNDERSTAND, the REASONING and CONCLUSIONS under that head, to vouchsafe me, the coolest, and most unprejudiced attention.

In the FIRST PLACE, I might, I apprehend, take for granted,—which is an act I am not in the habit of doing, that there are NO INNATE IDEAS, and consequently, —NO INNATE MORAL PRINCIPLES, OR NOTIONS;—such as those, I mean, which were formerly maintained. An opinion, which I doubt not, *you* will allow, has been properly exploded, being fashioned, only, of “*such stuff as our dreams are made of.*”

SECONDLY, that the word, CONSCIENCE, signifies only, the INTERNAL APPROBATION, and DISAPPROBATION, of which, we feel *ourselves* to be the *objects*, either as we perform certain actions, or omit
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the performance of them, and vice versa; but, that it DOES NOT imply also the RULE of ACTION ITSELF; which, at the time, we either conform to,—or transgress. Since, we must assuredly, have *first known* the *rule*, and learned, that, it was WORTHY of approbation, or disapprobation, before we could feel ourselves DESERVING, OR, UNDESERVING OF THOSE SENSATIONS.

But lest you or any other of my readers, should refuse to admit, these PROPOSITIONS as TRUTHS, take the following, “*reductio ad absurdum*:” which is equally applicable to *every species* of supposition,—of *innate ideas*,—*innate notions*,—and of a MORAL SENSE. For from the admission of *any one* of them, then it would follow,—that ALL the RULES and PRACTICES, in *different* societies, would be guided by ONE UNIFORM INSTINCT; and the SAME ACTIONS of conduct, would be INVARIABLY, and UNIVERSALLY APPROVED in

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ALL the various countries, nations, and tribes upon earth. Which, is a circumstance, we know to be REPUGNANT, to ALL the documents of history, and ALL the conclusions of experience.

From these DATA, then it necessarily follows, that the RULES of MORAL SCIENCE, must be deduced, as ALL OTHER SCIENCES ARE, from the INDUCTION of PARTICULAR FACTS; from which, are formed GENERAL PROPOSITIONS. But, as the SCIENCE of MORALS, or a SYSTEM of VIRTUE, is invented, to teach men, to regulate their behaviour to each other, UNIVERSALLY; NO SUCH SCIENCE, could POSSIBLY EXIST, 'TILL SOME PARTICULAR RULES had FIRST been layed down for THIS PURPOSE; as, THAT SCIENCE, must CONSIST LIKE ALL OTHERS, in GENERALISING PARTICULAR RULES. Hence then it likewise follows, that an UNION, must first have been formed amongst mankind,

kind, and *particular rules* must have been tried, before, the GENERAL rules could have been FRAMED. Because, as the *general rules constitute the science*, and THESE must have been GENERALISED out of PARTICULAR rules, the LAST, must have been PRIOR, to the SCIENCE ITSELF.

From these premises then, the ORIGIN and PROGRESS of MORAL SCIENCE, clearly, and manifestly flow. For, in consequence of the FREEDOM, LEISURE, and SECURITY, which men enjoy under the protection of any tolerably well regulated government, be it's form, what it will; the wants of men increasing with increasing numbers, impel men's minds to the discovery of the MEANS, best suited, to a constant supply of their gratifications. Hence, *first* arise, some of the more immediately useful, but most obvious arts and sciences. But as by exercise, men's attention and faculty of reason, gradually strengthen, and improve,

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they advance in the discovery of others, certainly not less useful, but more abstruse. From much exercise in determining, the *quantum* of good, which results from one particular MODE of ACTING, in a present and particular case, they proceed to frame GENERAL PROPOSITIONS and PRINCIPLES, upon ALL subjects; and to have a habit of foresight and sagacity; by which, they are enabled to penetrate into remote consequences; and to form comparisons, between very distant objects. Hence then, having observed, that the GRAND END, for which men united into society, was to secure the GENERAL HAPPINESS of every order, rank, and situation; and that the MEANS to this, was by their UNIVERSAL OBEDIENCE to the WILL of their LEGISLATOR, who was appointed to CURB and RESTRAIN by LAWS, the inclinations and passions of those, who would otherwise act contrary to that principle;—they soon learned to ABSTRACT from their PARTICULAR state and situation, all those GE-

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NERAL RULES, by which their actions are regulated, and to conceive them to be EQUALLY BINDING upon ALL mankind, in every place, whether, they do, or do not exist, as the LAWS of their PARTICULAR STATE. When they have advanced, *thus far*, then,—those who act according to those *universal principles*, without any reference to the punishments, which the *law* of the *state* inflicts,—they call,—VIRTUOUS;—and they who deviate from them,—they term,—VICIOUS; in *contradistinction* to those, who only obeying, or disobeying the *laws* of their particular government,—*as being* the *laws* of their government,—are denominated HONEST, OR DISHONEST,—JUST OR UNJUST.

Again, after men have turned their researches to the *nature* of *man*, and of the *human mind*, and deduced some *general* principles, from such an enquiry,—they begin to aspire after the acquisition, of

some knowledge,—of the DIVINE MIND, or of the NATURE of GOD. Some intimation of WHOSE EXISTENCE, and some scanty notion of HIS nature,—of his being the DIVINE LEGISLATOR, or rewarder and punisher of man,—they had perhaps before reaped from some *immediate* or *remote* TRADITION. Impelled then by this curiosity, and assisted, by this information, they began to endeavour to DEMONSTRATE, HIS EXISTENCE, from the DEDUCTIONS, of their own REASON. For, we invariably find, in ALL the PROOFS, in ALL nations, which are given of the EXISTENCE of a GOD, the FIRST ALWAYS is,—the *general*,—or as it is commonly, but not justly called, the UNIVERSAL BELIEF of that notion, in *other* countries.

As science of all kinds advanced, and men attained to a more intimate knowledge of the WORKS of NATURE in *particular*,—they learned,—that THESE, are ALL
generally

generally conducive to the HAPPINESS of mankind; and finding, that *human* governments, which originated from the REASON of MAN, directly tended to the SAME END;—they concluded, that he who would *always* act upon *that* principle, would approach nearest, and be most acceptable to God; and therefore inferred,—that a DIVINE GOVERNMENT,—must have been established by the WISDOM of GOD,—*conducive* also to the SAME END; in consequence of which, he would inflict punishments upon the vicious, and dispense rewards to the virtuous.

SUCH is the SOURCE,—from whence,—spring the LAWS of VIRTUE, and every PRINCIPLE, whether right or wrong,—of what is called,—MORALITY, and NATURAL RELIGION. And indeed, much OBSERVATION, must have been made upon the WORKS of NATURE, so as to discern, that whatever *subordinate* agents might be *em-*
ployed,

ployed,—yet, ONE UNCONTRIBUTABLE WILL directed the WHOLE, and the *faculties* of the *human mind* also, must have received a *considerable degree* of *cultivation*,—before, —*those men*,—who had received no *immediate REVELATION* from HEAVEN,—or *certain tradition* of one,—could possibly have ceased to be POLYTHEISTS; notwithstanding the information, which, a *primæval tradition*, might have faintly, though *generally diffused*.

But *Socrates*, and *Plato*, having most deeply investigated, both the lower and the higher powers, and faculties of the *human mind*,—and by a most laborious cultivation of the faculty of INTELLECT, to a degree I may say with truth, FAR BEYOND that, to which the *moderns* have yet arrived,—clearly discerning the DIFFERENCE, and even OPPOSITION between MIND and BODY;—maintained,—that GOD would reward and punish men, in *another life*, in proportion

portion to their virtue or vice here; and as the *necessary foundation* to this doctrine,—attempted to raise it, upon a DEMONSTRATION of the NATURAL IMMORALITY of the HUMAN SOUL.

But, as the most elevated human intellect, CAN only be able to DEMONSTRATE,—that there is NO NECESSARY CONNECTION,—between the DISSOLUTION of the BODY, and the *consequent* ANNIHILATION of the SOUL,—and can only show, merely from PROBABLE arguments, drawn from the GENERIC DIVERSITIES in the NATURES of both,—and likewise, from our *faint conception* of the WISDOM and GOODNESS of GOD,—that *such* a survival of the soul, seems a *necessary mean* to the progress of virtue here, and its reward hereafter,—the question,—as to the minds *actual survival*, was by the very NATURE of the EVIDENCE, *necessarily* involved (to the generality of the world) in much DOUBT,—great DIFFICULTY,—and no little perplexity.

plexity. Though certainly, to those, who are capable of following these almost divine philosophers in their speculations, through the knowledge of the nature of MIND, which *they* discovered,—must confess,—that THEY raised the supposition, that God has constituted the HUMAN MIND, for a CONTINUANCE of EXISTENCE, *after* the dissolution of the body,—to the very highest summit of proof, to which,—the nature of *that* species of evidence,—can POSSIBLY ascend. But, as the question, after which, they enquired,—was necessarily a question of FACT,—it could not POSSIBLY be ASCERTAINED by REASONING,—but only,—as all other facts must be,—either,—by our own actual EXPERIENCE,—or, the TESTIMONY of others. Reasoning being of no further use, even in instituting experiments, relative to the objects of our senses,—than the *contrivances* of *means*,—to render some things *sensible*, which were before unperceived. But as in this life, we certainly can never EXPERIENCE, what is the will and IN-

TENTION of God, in respect to another, —they CANNOT POSSIBLY therefore, be MADE KNOWN to us, but by the TESTIMONY of SOME ONE,—who produces the AUTHORITY of GOD TO REVEAL THEM.

It must likewise be confessed, much as I admire and reverence the *Socraticos Viros*, as *Tully* some where calls them, that their supposition (though I know not that any one has before observed it in, *this* sense) was calculated, only in a manner, for *philosophers*. As in the *Socratic philosophy*, virtue is synonymous with wisdom, to which the vulgar could not aspire; and VICE with IGNORANCE; in which they were necessarily involved. Not because philosophers, who discovered it, could not have instructed them in virtue, as *Sherlock*, (who was however one of the deepest thinkers, and closest reasoners of this age, too much so, for the generality of readers to understand) has supposed. For *they* might

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have been taught, VIRTUE as an ART,—as they are taught OTHER arts, without UNDERSTANDING the PRINCIPLES, which are the CONCLUSIONS of SCIENCE; but the real reason was, because no HUMAN TEACHER'S AUTHORITY, supplied a sufficient MOTIVE, to induce them to learn it, or urge them to practice it, if learned.*

These enquiries, whose speculations were comprehended under the name of PHILOSOPHY, when they were once begun, excited much attention, in the ablest, and most enlightened minds; and continued to
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* There are animals, we know, who prefer thistles, nettles, thorns, and briers, to the finest grass, of the richest pastures. Similar to theirs, seem to be the tastes of those, who prefer, the weedy works of some other English divines, to the firm, and nourishing productions, raised by the genius of a *Sherlock*.

give exercise, to much acuteness of reasoning, and much subtilty of dispute. From hence arose therefore, a variety of dissensions, and divisions, not only amongst the *antients*, but likewise amongst the *moderns*, as they happened to be more or less prepossessed in favour of one, or other of the different GRECIAN PHILOSOPHERS, from whose speculations, such notions are chiefly derived, and propagated.

For, the disciples of *Socrates*, (excepting those who followed *Plato*) soon separated into various sects, and were divided by a multitude of opinions. And, not being able to satisfy themselves in the DEMONSTRATION of a future existence, *again* ABSTRACTED the LAWS of *virtue* from the WILL, and AUTHORITY of a LEGISLATURE, and the sanctions of FUTURE rewards and punishments. But then turning their enquiries to the SUMMUM BONUM, or what constitutes

the highest happiness of this life ; each, endeavoured to find out SOME PRINCIPLE, which would make VIRTUE, and the SUMMUM BONUM to be ONE.

Some, as the STOICS, maintained that VIRTUE, was indisputably the SUMMUM BONUM, because, the WISE and VIRTUOUS MAN, was *incapable* of ALL SUFFERING ; as even PAIN, was to HIM, NO EVIL. For as HE, according to their maxims, must,—before he was entitled to those appellations,—have learned to DESIRE nothing, but what HAPPENS to him ; therefore it followed,—that no condition, nor event, could befall him,—but, what HE approved. A doctrine evidently true indeed, upon the PRINCIPLES of CHRISTIANITY ; where, pain is *really no evil* ; —because it is necessary to lead man to seek, as the first object of his pursuit,—his FUTURE FELICITY. From whence it follows, as a corollary, that no event, can
possibly

possibly happen to the real CHRISTIAN, which will not *conduce* to his *good*, if we take into our view, the whole extent of his being. But, upon any other supposition, this stoical doctrine is perfectly ridiculous. Because it raises a superstructure, without a foundation,—which the mere pressure, even of a single stone, is at once able to destroy.

Some, with EPICURUS himself, for most of his disciples misrepresented their master, founded the practice of it, upon the constant *ease* and *pleasure*, or rather, *tranquility* of mind, which virtue affords. An opinion, which, if this world *only* be considered, every day's experience contradicts.

Some again with the PERIPATETICS, acknowledged that *outward objects*, afforded pain and pleasure, and that though virtue therefore, did not produce the *only* satisfaction, yet, upon the *whole*, it afforded the GREAT-

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EST pleasure. But this system, by authorising such a contrariety of pursuits, as **ACKNOWLEDGED MEANS TO HAPPINESS**, carries in it's own frame, the seeds of it's own destruction.

Others again with **CICERO**, who in his **OFFICES** adopted, only a part of **PLATO**'s doctrine, or rather still more closely followed **PANETIUS**, founded **VIRTUE** on the **HONESTUM**, or the **HONOURABLE**; i. e. on the **APPROBATION** of mankind. A theory, which must shake with every blast. As, **FAME** for **VIRTUE**, no more than for **SCIENCE**, is, by any means distributed in proportion, to **REAL MERIT**. For, few men, can penetrate into the deep recesses of the heart, where only it can be accurately discerned; and therefore, the artful, cunning, designing hypocrite, is often puffed into renown, by the public breath; whilst, the wisest and the best, are frequently exposed to all the

the blasts of envy,—and all the whispers of malignity.

But at length, GOD having been pleased to REVEAL HIS WILL TO ALL mankind, both, —in respect to the AFFECTIONS, which are required from man,—the RULE OF CONDUCT he is to pursue; and the REWARDS OR PUNISHMENTS,—which are to attend upon his obedience or disobedience; men have now *abstracted* STILL BETTER PRINCIPLES, from the DECLARATIONS of the GREAT AUTHOR, and formed them into systems, either of what they call VIRTUE,—or of what they call MORALITY,—OR NATURAL LAW,—OR NATURAL RELIGION. Hence, MANY have been induced to suppose, that because these are *consonant* with the *principles* of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, *that religion* has revealed to us, *no other rules* of conduct, than what our own *natural reason* could discover; and notwithstanding therefore, they
admit

admit the *rules*, they reject the *authority*, upon which they are built; and even ridicule the *evidence*, by which, they are established.

Mankind then, having totally forgotten, or, having never learned, what *experience* could have taught them, of the process of the human mind, in the discovery of all the duties, which proceed from the exercise of their own faculties; and what, with all their application, they were incapable of discovering; whatever RIGHT OR DUTY,—however discovered, which *appears* to them to be REASONABLE, they conclude, to have been the produce of that faculty, from it's earliest cultivation. Involved in this mistake, they produce systems, as containing ORIGINAL, ETERNAL, and IMMUTABLE OBLIGATIONS, by which they assert, that ALL MEN WERE EVER bound to act, BEFORE the EXISTENCE of ANY GOVERNMENT; i. e. even before
there

there was the *possibility* of the pursuit of any *investigations*, which are the ONLY MEANS to *that* END. Those then, who are once seduced into these errors, consequently consider, the above really *distinct*, and *several separate* SPECIES of knowledge, as having only ONE SIMPLE INVARIABLE cause; and that cause, as being the SOLE ORIGIN of ALL men's VARIOUS RIGHTS, and DUTIES WHATSOEVER. Whereas, on the contrary, SO FAR, AS ANY of them, were DISCOVERED by MEN, they were only the DEDUCTIONS,—which they had made, in CONSEQUENCE of the RIGHTS, to which, GOVERNMENT FIRST GAVE BIRTH; and must therefore, be SUBSEQUENT, NOT PREVIOUS to IT'S EXISTENCE.

So likewise, such a system of doctrines as the CHRISTIAN REVELATION contains, could not have been attended with any benefit to mankind, (*except to those, to*
P whom

whom it was given as a *completion* of a former) 'till the establishment of *human governments and laws*, and the *tradition* of the EXISTENCE of a GOD,—had led men into speculations, and enquiries, concerning WHAT actions, were most probably pleasing to, that FIRST CAUSE, and PRESERVER of ALL THINGS. *This*, we may learn from *experience* of objects, which, if we do not actually see, are however made known to us in the pages of history. For, from it's records we learn; that there are now *many nations*, though they may be taught to believe, in the *authenticity* of the *christian religion*, are, for want of the exercise, of their reason on civilization, and other arts, totally unfitted for the *practice* of it's duties.* And on the contrary, all those in the most cultivated nations,

* See my COMMENCEMENT Sermon, before the University of Cambridge.

tions, who CONCEIVE *those duties* to be NO OTHER, than what are DISCOVERABLE by REASON;—are incapable of embracing, and relishing, the *purest* and *sublimest*, of it's doctrines. For they even deem *that*, to be MORAL *conduct*, which originates only in the NATURAL PASSIONS of mankind, —such as VANITY,—PRIDE,—AMBITION, and REVENGE.

Thus, as *some* in their theory, do not discriminate the *various origins* of these systems, so *others* in their practice, confound their *different effects*. From whence it proceeds, that the SAME OUTWARD ACT, which is often done from VARIOUS MOTIVES, is in common language, in ALL these CASES, equally termed, GOOD, and VIRTUOUS. Whereas, upon the *principles* of *christianity*, it is NOT the OUTWARD FORM,—but ONLY the MOTIVE,—which constitutes an act *virtuous*, or *vicious*. And therefore, *many* may do, what in common

P. 2

discourse,

discourse, are called *good actions*,—because, in their *consequences*, they are *attended* with *good* to others;—who are, by no means *really* entitled, to the denomination of **GOOD MEN.**

Whatever *system* of MORAL DUTY however, be selected; and whatever be the *motive* chosen as the incentive, to urge us to correspondent actions; *not one* of them, have the *least tendency* to ALTER the RELATION, between the GOVERNOR and the GOVERNED; as to the RIGHT of COMMAND in the one, and of the DUTY of OBEDIENCE in the other. And, if the TRUEST, and SUREST principles be chosen, which are likewise sanctioned by the STRONGEST MOTIVES, and of whose UNERRING RECTITUDE, there can be no doubt,—as they come from GOD'S WISDOM, NOT MAN'S REASON; THEY have, certainly at least an *immediate* tendency, not only to *mollify*, and even to *subdue*, all those passions
of

OF PRIDE, AMBITION, AVARICE, and REVENGE; which are, equally the CAUSES, of TYRANNY in the SOVEREIGN, and of RESISTANCE in the SUBJECT. THEY therefore, not only,—*teach*, but command the *former*, NOT to inflict any pain or penalty, but what is *absolutely* necessary, to the PUBLIC GOOD; not indeed, under the penalty of their SUBJECT'S REBELLION, but of GOD'S PUNISHMENT. But, they likewise *instruct*, and *enable* the LATTER, by the most forcible injunctions, and the brightest examples of CHRIST, and his APOSTLES, where the GOVERNOR,—even NEGLECTS HIS DUTY,—to SUBMIT with PATIENCE, not only, “for WRATH, but “likewise,—for CONSCIENCE sake.”

And here, Sir, I can not forbear to observe, that as FALSE PHILOSOPHY, is continually receding farther, and farther, from CHRISTIANITY; so the TRUE, approximates as near to it, as *finite*, can, to
infinite

infinite wisdom. For, I have before suggested to you, the *example* of *Socrates*, in *his* obedience, to the sentence of his unjust judges. And could I, but prevail upon you, to read only *Plato's little dialogue, between Socrates and Crito*, and attentively to study, and digest it, it would perhaps impart to you infinitely more real benefit, than you ever received from *all* the volumes upon government, you have *formerly read*, or even the *ESSAY*, upon *that subject*, (as you call it) which you have *long since written*, and I *long since refuted*. For then,

Hi motus animorum, atque hæc certamina tanta,
Pulveris exigui jactu, compressa quiescant.

If I fail in this appeal, to the FASCINATING NAME OF PHILOSOPHY, the GRAND DIRECTRESS OF MODERN TIMES; the *now*

GUARDIAN

GUARDIAN PATRONESS of *France*, though *their* philosophy is indeed totally different from *that*, I have just now recommended, —I despair of any efficacy,—from the *passages*, to which I have also, just now referred you, in the *pages* of CHRISTIANITY; perspicuous as are their words, and consequently, evident as is their sense.

With *such wonderful* plainness indeed, do they inculcate, both by *precept* and *example*, the DUTY of SUBJECTS to their RULERS, that one would think, it is actually impossible, for *every one*, who has not drank to the very dregs of MODERN PHILOSOPHY, and who really believes, in the TRUTH of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, to WITHOLD his ASSENT from the DECLARATION, or to REFUSE his OBEDIENCE to the INJUNCTION. How mortifying soever it may be to some, to withdraw their allegiance from *modern philosophers*, in submission to the higher *authority* of
CHRIST;

CHRIST; yet, if they *do acknowledge*, the *authority* of the *last*, to be superior, to that of the *former*, they must comply, and acknowledge, obedience in subjects, is due to their rulers, WHETHER THEY BE MILD and GENTLE, OR CRUEL and TYRANNICAL:—Even impossible, as it appears to *some* of your admirers and scholars,—that such a *declaration*, and *acknowledgment*,—should be made by ANY ONE, in the conclusion, of this MOST ENLIGHTENED, EIGHTEENTH, CENTURY.

Nay, Sir, such likewise, must necessarily have been the predicament, in which, even YOU YOURSELF, would have stood, had it not been, for that most HAPPY, and most WONDERFUL DISCOVERY, of a RATIONAL RELIGION; whose AUTHORITY, outweighs, the *authenticity* of REVELATION. A discovery, which some of the bigots of our establishment, are too destitute of abilities, to comprehend. For they are so
weak

weak as to conceive, that the words "RATIONAL RELIGION," and the RELIGION OF REASON,—must be *synonymous*. But, as such an imagination betrays, as you well know, the blindest ignorance;—I do not wonder, that we always see you,—your admirers and followers,—lose your *meekness*,—your *patience*,—and your *temper*,—whenever you have occasion to mention the ARTICLES, DOCTRINES, OR MINISTERS of the *Church of England*.

For if the above stupid supposition, of some of the members of that *worst* of all churches, for such I am told, it is, in your writings, —were true,—then, the *grossest* of all *absurdities*, would follow,—viz.—that the CHRISTIAN REVELATION, and RATIONAL RELIGION, would be REALLY ONE, and, THE SAME THING. Because, when once a REVELATION IS GIVEN TO ALL MANKIND,—THAT ALONE,—must be the only RATIONAL RELIGION;—IF it be REASONABLE, that

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the CONJECTURES of MAN'S REASON,—
should SUBMIT to the DECLARATIONS of
DIVINE WISDOM.

Whereas in fact, nothing can be more
DIRECTLY OPPOSITE to *each other*, than
GOD'S REVELATION, and what, YOU, call,
RATIONAL RELIGION. The *latter* being a
dispensation only to some CHOSEN FEW,
to enable them to determine, by the su-
perior light of their faculties, but from
the exercise of which we find, by expe-
rience, every received rule of LOGIC, must
first be *discarded*,—what PARTS of GOD'S
REVELATION they are *pleased* to admit,
and what they *chuse* to *reject*. Precisely
in the same manner, as we find, has
likewise been imparted to them, the RIGHT
of CHUSING, what laws of the legislature
they will obey, and what, they will vilify
and abuse. So intimately connected, are
your RELIGIOUS, and POLITICAL PRIN-
CIPLES, and so close is the ALLIANCE,
which

which you conceive to exist, between RELIGION and CIVIL GOVERNMENT; and consequently therefore, between CIVIL and RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS.

There may be some, Sir, perhaps, so ignorant, but I take for granted then, they can only be amongst my brother ministers of the establishment, who, according to your repeated declarations, and those of your friends, are the MOST IGNORANT of all divines; as to fancy,—SUCH a RATIONAL RELIGION, must necessarily be the offspring only of pride, vanity, and arrogance, because, they imagine, that it's APOSTLES, and their converts, must conceive THEMSELVES to be WISER, than HE, who PROVED his AUTHORITY, to REVEAL the WILL of GOD. But if men, who are dull enough to make such a supposition, were capable of reading an author, who though he was not of your sect, was admirably well acquainted with your doctrines;—they

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might

might learn,—that this claim to RATIONAL RELIGION, is one of the NATURAL IMPRESCRIPTIBLE RIGHTS of your PERSUASION. For this author, I mean the *learned Butler*, tells us,

Suppose the Scriptures are of *force*,
 They're but *commissions* of course,
 And *Saints* have *freedom* to digress,
 And *vary from them* as *they please*.

Having thus accompanied you, to take a view of the foundation of the ONLY PRINCIPLES, which can enable you to REJECT, the otherwise DECISIVE and IRRESISTIBLE determination of REVELATION upon *this* subject; I will, by concluding this letter,—leave you to the pleasing consolation it affords.

And am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R VI.

SIR,

HA V I N G already vindicated the
O R I G I N of those principles, which I
have assigned above,—against the impu-
tation of E R R O R ; I am now likewise to
defend the C O N S E Q U E N C E S,—which result
from them,—against the accusation of A B -
S U R D I T Y , and I N J U S T I C E .

To those,—who having not the benefit
of those principles, with which the fore-
going letter concludes, and by which, men
are

are enabled to shelter themselves, even from the CONVICTION, which REVELATION is fitted to impart, I doubt not, but I shall be able to defend the principles I have advanced, as clearly against the objection to their *consequences*, as against the other to their *origin*.

Each objection, may perhaps upon a hasty and superficial view, appear to be as weighty and valuable as gold. But when both are put into the opposite scale, to be tried with it, they will both be found in the balance of truth, totally deficient in their specific gravities, and consequently of no intrinsic value.

For, *first*, I not only most readily grant, that *no tyranny or cruelty* in a governor, can possibly be JUSTIFIED; so likewise I maintain, that the PRINCIPLES, which I have advanced, have not the remotest tendency, towards any attempt, at it's justification;—
but

but on the contrary, that they in the strongest manner pronounce their condemnation.

I admit indeed, that from those PRINCIPLES, it follows, that UNIVERSAL OBEDIENCE to the government, of whatever nature it be, whether it be administered by the uncontrouled WILL of ONE MAN, of a FEW, or of MANY;—or it be shared in any proportions, between ONE, a FEW, and MANY,—is EQUALLY, the DUTY of the *governed*. And, however the proposition, when thus *plainly* and *unequivocally* stated, may appear to *some*; yet certainly, it is not only VIRTUALLY, but also POSITIVELY admitted by ALL, who allow, that an ABSOLUTE UNCONTRoulABLE POWER, must exist SOMEWHERE, in EVERY STATE. For, amongst all the airy visions, and meteorous coruscations, which are continually gliding through the political atmosphere, of this floating Island;—THIS POSITION, has never, within the sphere of my remembrance, been denied.

It being as self-evident, at least as any proposition can be, that without *such* an ABSOLUTE power, not only, no constitution could be of any *long duration*, but that it could not even for a moment, *subsist*.

For, if a government was even so absurdly constituted, that the PEOPLE were under NO OBLIGATION to OBEY a law, 'TILL,—it had been PROPOSED TO EVERY *district, city, town, village, and parish*, of a wide extended empire, and had been APPROVED,—by the MAJORITY of ALL the inhabitants,—*men, women, and children*,—THIS would not in the *smallest degree* INVALIDATE my CONCLUSION. Nay, the position would remain *equally true*, were even, *so absurd*, a constitution of government to exist,—as the following,—which is perhaps still *more* absurd, than the foregoing;—viz. that the *majority* of the *people*, —*men*,—*women*,—and *children*, (and what could the most ardent lovers of LIBERTY and REPUBLICANISM *wish* for *more*) should

in every district, city, town, village, and parish, have a RIGHT TO RESIST every law, which they do not approve, the very *first time*, it was *attempted* to be *executed*, *after* it had been passed; and it is to *one* or *other* of these ABSURDITIES, ALL the plans of politicians in this *enlightened age*, ULTIMATELY TEND. For even then, there MUST be an UNCONTROULABLE ABSOLUTE POWER, *somewhere* EXISTING in the STATE, notwithstanding the legislative power chiefly resided (as no doubt it ought) in the very *dregs* of the people, (as they have been *inadvertently* called by some, who have the profoundest veneration for their judgment,) and who in that case, would indeed be the *enlightened legislators* of *such* a constitution. But I say, that even then, for fear, that the people,—*after* they had *once* given their consent to a law, which had been passed, for which, they had *then* a RIGHT to be asked,—should *afterwards* RESIST *that very law*, which they had *then*

NO RIGHT to disobey,—the constitution, *must lodge*, some UNCONTROULABLE POWER SOMEWHERE, or, the government in such a case, would be INSTANTLY DISSOLVED.

Should such a blessed form of government as *this*, which now only exists in the *sublime* speculations of *modern politicians*, be once reduced to practice,—*then* indeed would be realized, that beautiful picture, seen by some, in their mental eye, (“*whilst in a fine phrensy rolling,*”) of the government, of ALL, by ALL. Oh glorious *Æra!* enviable state! which some in their rapturous visions see, near at hand! For how much superior, both in happiness, and duration, would it be even to that FIFTH MONARCHY,—which,—their forefathers likewise, in visions, saw—*fast approaching*. But which, luckily for their descendants,—who entertain the most rooted aversion, to the *very name* of a MONARCHY,—is *not yet come*; and of which, to their great joy, they *have now no expectation*.

But however, 'till the commencement of that other illustrious epoch, for which, the greatest and sagest politicians of this age, are so devoutly wishing; whatever may be the NUMBER of the people, whether FEW OR MANY, who, not being by the CONSTITUTION, vested in any participation of the POWER, of MAKING OR EXECUTING the laws,—shall notwithstanding, take upon themselves to DETERMINE,—WHAT LAWS they will OBEY, and WHAT, THEY WILL NOT, they certainly (whatever their physical power may be) *assume* a POWER in the state, to which they have NO RIGHT. Because they both annihilate the government, and revert into a *state of nature*. For by such a conduct, they disclaim the RIGHT of the GOVERNOR OR GOVERNORS to COMMAND, and if, HE or they, to whom the power of making and executing the laws in the state be intrusted, EXERCISE his or their RIGHT, and DUTY, in the attempt to INFORCE them, meet with

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RESISTANCE,

RESISTANCE,—the people who arrogated the power to themselves, to which they had NO RIGHT, are certainly in the eye of truth and reason the CRIMINALS, and not the LEGISLATORS and GOVERNORS,—as is the fashionable opinion of the day, in opposition even to common sense.

For, let us even suppose a case, in which, the people *think* the laws which they refuse to obey, to be very contrary to the *general* happiness, of the society, for which the government was instituted; and let them in reality be *ever so much so*. Now, though the legislator can not be JUSTIFIED, in MAKING such a law, reference being made to the laws of *virtue, morality, or religion*: Yet when enacted, he has, from the very *nature, essence, and principles* of government, a RIGHT to INFORCE them. Neither can RESISTANCE in the subjects, reference being had to the laws of *virtue and religion*, be JUSTIFIED.

Because,

Because, from the SAME NATURE of government, THEY are BOUND to *obey* them. Both parties indeed, would in such a case, be guilty and AMENABLE to the LAWS of GOD; wherever, I mean, those laws, have been made known, both to the legislator, and the people. And as it is the reliance, which each party has on it's own power, to subdue the other, which when UNRESTRAINED by RELIGION, can ever induce either party to MAKE AN APPEAL TO THE SWORD, when any difference in opinion, occurs between the governor and the governed,—NOTHING, can more EFFECTUALLY EVINCE the IMPORTANCE and NECESSITY OF RELIGION, to the SUPPORT of CIVIL GOVERNMENT. It's aid being we see, INDISPENSABLY REQUISITE, for the INSTRUCTION, BOTH of the governors, and the governed, in THEIR DUTY; and for the supply of both with HIGHER PRINCIPLES, and more FORCIBLE MOTIVES, to subdue their passions, and to regulate their respective conduct to each other; by SUBJUGATING the DE-

SIREs of BOTH PARTIES, to the WILL of GOD. REVERENCE, therefore for the DEITY and OBEDIENCE to HIS REVEALED LAWS, and a SACRED ATTENTION to ALL the MEANS, which LEAD to such an END, are both the great CEMENT in EVERY PART, and the GRAND KEY-STONE in the WHOLE FRAME of CIVIL GOVERNMENT. Because, it is evident, that without the controul of religion, there is no power to curb the DESPOTIC WILL of the GOVERNOR, but, the *fear* of the *rebellion* of the *subjects*; and also, that, WITHOUT IT'S INFLUENCE, NO RESTRAINT remains upon the STILL MORE LICENTIOUS WILLS OF THE SUBJECTS, when, all dread is removed from them, of the *ability* of the ruler, to controul. In either case,

is plucked from curb'd licence,
The muzzle of restraint, and the wild dog
Shall flesh his tooth on every innocent.

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This CONCLUSION, you perceive, Sir, not only flows directly and uninterruptedly from the foregoing PREMISES; but likewise as you will find, *necessarily* gives rise to OTHER STREAMS OF KNOWLEDGE, with the SOURCES of which, you seem at present to be unacquainted; as they are certainly not to be discovered, by any directions, which have been pointed out by *Mr. Locke*. But, as these more properly belong to ANOTHER PART OF OUR ENQUIRY, and WILL, in THAT, be evidently discernible; I shall now seize this opportunity, of leaving you for a time to your lucubrations, that you may, if you choose *ſo* to employ the interval, MEDITATE upon this MOST VALUABLE, and consequently most IMPORTANT of ALL SUBJECTS, which can either solicit man's attention, or engage his enquiry.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R VII.

SIR,

AS, from the little knowledge I have of human nature, I apprehend, it to be most probable, that you have rather been endeavouring to find some broken link in the chain, by which my foregoing premises and conclusions are united, than to discover, what other links will naturally append to it, I shall in this letter, adapt myself precisely to such a meditation. For though I have not the smallest apprehension of your discovery, of a *glaw* in that *concatenation*, yet I doubt not, but you
imagine,

imagine, that you have an instrument within your reach, by which you shall be able to shatter, the *whole chain*, into a thousand fragments.

For, I apprehend, that you are ready to oppose to these principles, and conclusions, *that* sophism, if I may be allowed the expression, "*millies decies repetitum*" with little variation in *form*,—viz.—"that, "as the *very end*, for which government "was instituted, was the *general happiness* "of the society, it is *therefore absurd* to "suppose, that the MAJORITY *can be bound* "to OBEY those commands, laws, and institutions, to which, they have not by some "means or other, given their assent, which "is the UNALIENABLE RIGHT of ALL "MANKIND."

But, Sir, be pleased to consider, that it is upon the *truth* of the two following

S POSITIONS,

POSITIONS, that ALL GOVERNMENT WHATSOEVER WAS ORIGINALLY founded.

First, that the MULTITUDE, are NOT the BEST JUDGES, of what, *will most* conduce even to their *own individual*, much less therefore, to the *general* happiness of a society.

And *secondly*, that, if, they COULD discover the MEANS, to this GREAT END;—they would not VOLUNTARILY impose upon themselves, those *restraints* which are necessary for it's attainment.

The truth of the FIRST of these positions, is *evident* from hence,—that the *bulk* of the people, can neither spare a sufficient portion of time, to allot to *reflection*, nor consequently therefore have the requisite opportunity, for the acquisition of that portion of *reason*, *understanding*, and *wisdom*, which is absolutely necessary, for the *selection*,

lection, of the *propereſt* MEANS to that END, out of a *great variety* of circumſtances,—whoſe GENERIC, and SPECIFIC DIFFERENCES, can *not* be aſcertained, without much cloſeneſs of attention, and exactneſs of diſcrimination. For ſurely, LEGISLATION, conſidered as a SCIENCE, at leaſt requires *as good* ABILITIES for it's ACQUISITION as *any other* SCIENCE; and when conſidered as an ART, demands as *habitual* an application, and *ſkill* for it's PRACTICE, as *any other* ART.

The truth of the *ſecond* propoſition, is *not leſs* evident than that of the firſt. For, were the *multitude*, capable of *diftinguiſhing*, what is *moſt* conducive to THEIR GENERAL GOOD; upon WHAT PRINCIPLE, I beſeech you, could they be INDUCED to CHOOSE it, in *preference*, to the *immediate* gratification of ſome *deſire*, *inclination*, and *paſſion*, eſpecially when,—as in the caſe ſuppoſed,—there was *no expectation* of any

punishment, or controul whatsoever, to *in-*
force it? Will you say,—they might de-
 rive sufficient motives from the LAWS OF
 VIRTUE, or of MORALITY. But, before you
 can maintain this,—you must have totally
 forgotten, what, has been already *fully* pro-
 ved,—that *had* such a position as this, been
originally admitted, as the JUST *principle*
 of ALL government, viz:—that the *people*,
 OUGHT either to *make*, or, *when made*, give
their approbation to the LAWS, before they
 should be obliged to OBEY them; then,—
 NO SUCH LAWS as THOSE of VIRTUE,
 COULD EVER have been DISCOVERED by
 human reason, for the regulation of hu-
 man conduct. For, it has been clearly
 shown, that THEY, are all built, upon the
 EXPERIENCE, which is derived from the
 UTILITY of GOVERNMENT, in COMPEL-
 LING the multitude, to SACRIFICE the gra-
 tification of their PRIVATE, inclinations,
 and SELFISH passions, to the GENERAL
 happiness of the SOCIETY; and, that from
 thence,

thence, these GENERAL LAWS of VIRTUE and MORALITY, were DEDUCED; to comprehend, within the bonds of their obligation, ALL MANKIND.

If however, you will *reject this system of mine*, as too novel for your appetite, and will go back to the old system of *any other* writer, upon the ORIGIN of MORAL OBLIGATION; you will find;—that your argument, by “*proving too much,—proves nothing.*” For, if the laws of *virtue and morality*, are able to INDUCE the multitude to *sacrifice* upon all occasions, their OWN PRIVATE GRATIFICATIONS to the PUBLIC GOOD,—then it follows,—that *all civil government*, is altogether unnecessary, and useless, either to the guidance, or restraint of men’s volitions, and inclinations. Whereas to produce this GREAT END, was *really* the SOLE PURPOSE of IT’S FIRST INSTITUTION.

Will

Will you then maintain, that however *false*, *such* a position would have been *formerly*; yet as GOD has been pleased to REVEAL HIS WILL, to ALL mankind, there can be no objection to the admission of SUCH a PRINCIPLE of government *now*; because, CHRISTIANITY, supplies ALL MEN, with a SUFFICIENT MOTIVE to SUCH a conduct?

If *this*, should be your argument; permit me to remind you; *first*, that, as christianity supplies motives, *equally efficacious* to the *governors*, as to the *governed*; by *parity* of *reasoning*, there is much *less necessity* NOW, to admit the people into any *participation* of the *legislative power*,—than there was *formerly*; because there is *now* therefore by your own confession, an *additional restraint* upon the TYRANNY of GOVERNORS. And CHRISTIANITY, certainly does not supply the people, with *that knowledge*, which is *necessary* for making

CHANGES

CHANGES in governments; though, it furnishes them, with *that wisdom*, which is *requisite*, for THEIR OBEDIENCE to governors. For it even gives us, *particular* caution, “to BEWARE of THOSE,—who “are GIVEN to CHANGE.”

Secondly, had you been aware of the consequences, which follow from this argument,—they would have made you “start aside, like a broken bow.” For such an argument, by the substitution of *another* principle, instantly deprives the people of their claim, to a share in the legislation,—upon the *pene divinum* plea,—of NATURAL RIGHT.

Thirdly, if, because, God has vouchsafed to instruct man in his duty, we are therefore according to your system of logic, to conclude, that ALL MEN WILL NECESSARILY UNDERSTAND, and PRACTISE it; this happens unfortunately to you, to be

a conclusion, which *daily experience* contradicts, from the *very evidence* of your own, and your friends' conduct. For, though the christian religion inculcates into it's votaries, universal SUBMISSION to rulers, there is not a day passes over our heads, in which, either *you*, or *some* of your associates, do not contradict this, by inculcating, NOT OBEDIENCE, but RESISTANCE to government, as the GRAND DUTY, of SUBJECTS.

But, if this conclusion were not even *thus* irreconcilable with FACT;—yet, mark well, I beseech you,—what *still must* be, the *melancholy tendency* of it's consequences. For though, certainly such a conclusion; might be *productive* of the *most* IMPORTANT benefits, by raising a storm, which would EXTIRPATE every root, and branch, of OUR RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENT; “a
“*consummation, by you, (no doubt,) devout-*
“*ly to be wished;*” yet unluckily,—it would

in

in it's fury,—hurry away with it likewise, —every timber, brick, and stone of every dissenting minister's meeting-house in the whole world.

For, admitting this doctrine to be true; it would then be an act of *robbery*, in every minister of every denomination, to demand *contributions*, any more, than *tithes* from their congregations. Or at least, it would be but a *swindling trick*, in them, to cozen their congregations out of their money, by pretending,—to *sell* them a *commodity*, of which they were in full possession, without the payment for it, even of a single doit.

I have some consolation however, in thinking, that how frequently soever, such a doctrine as this, I am now combating, may be advanced;—that it arises only from the *laudable motive*, of rendering OUR PRESENT CIVIL and RELIGIOUS ESTABLISH-

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MENT CONTEMPTIBLE, in the eyes of IT'S SUBJECTS; and by these means, *encouraging* them, as far as can be done, *with safety*, to *overturn* it, and bury it's doctrines, and it's ministers, in the ruins.

For, I cannot think, that *even* YOU, SIR, and then it is impossible to conceive, that ANY ONE ELSE, would be willing to put *such* a doctrine, to the only *sure test* of it's truth,—EXPERIENCE. That is to say,—to try,—whether the multitude,—(I mean,)—not only barely the *majority*, but an almost infinite number *above* a majority, (for if a majority has a RIGHT, a *fortiori*, a *larger* number has still *more* right, to MAKE LAWS) are not BEST QUALIFIED, to ENACT LAWS for the *general* happiness; and whether, they will NOT MOST READILY OBEY them, when, *all temporal penalties* are removed; and nothing remains to enforce them, but merely the *more remote influence* of *religious sanctions*.

tions. For it should seem, that the *National Assembly* of France, even in their *MULTIPLICITY* OF EXPERIMENTS, all founded, upon the *REVERSE* of every conclusion, deduced from *experience* of the *nature* of man, have not yet advanced quite so far, as to try *this*; as they have neither given at present, a *MAJORITY* of the *PEOPLE*, a *RIGHT* OF MAKING LAWS, nor even of *CHOOSING* REPRESENTATIVES. Yet *THEY* have in *reserve*, a much more powerful engine of their own contrivance, to ENFORCE OBEDIENCE, than as they think, ANY REVELATION FROM GOD, can possibly be;—you already guess that I mean, —their intended *frame* of *institutes*,—for the EDUCATION of a CITIZEN.

Till therefore, the legislators of other nations are become *even wiser*, than those enlightened ones in France, who have discovered REVEALED RELIGION to be a JEST,—and INJUSTICE to be NO VICE;—

and that PILLAGE, ROBBERY, MURDER, and SACRILEGE, are the FOUR CARDINAL VIRTUES; the subjects of *other* nations, must be *content* to OBEY the *laws*, of their respective governments, though they should not happen to *enact* them. Nay, though they should, even chance to think, that a law does *not* contribute to the *greatest general happiness*;—they are still bound to obedience,—from a PRINCIPLE; which is the *foundation* of ALL GOVERNMENT, and therefore paramount to all other considerations. For where ever, a *legislature* exists, though it be composed of *fallible* men, it follows, from the very *definition* of the term, that *it* has a *right* to MAKE, and the *executive power*, has a RIGHT to enforce *such laws*, as seem to THEM, *best* calculated to produce the *general happiness*: and *submission* to them, is the DUTY of ALL the SUBJECTS. THIS is a PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL OBLIGATION, which is common to ALL LAWS, from the

VERY

VERY ESSENCE of the *thing*, whether, they are laws made by the legislature of a *particular* state,—whether, they are the LAWS of *virtue*, or of *morality*, deduced by men's reasoning faculties, or *sanctioned* by the REVELATION, of an INFALLIBLE LEGISLATOR.

Strange, and almost inconceivable, as the foregoing position may appear, to many at first sight; yet, it is in fact, not only perfectly intelligible, but likewise very easily proved. For, were individuals left to themselves to determine, when even those general laws, of morality and religion, should be obeyed, and when not; many,—or all,—even perhaps of THEM, would NOT APPEAR to be always conducive to the general good. On the contrary, it would appear to the fallible optics of the wisest men, that GREATER GOOD in particular cases, might arise from the non-observance, than from acting in conformity to them.

But

But why then, it may be asked, did *men* deduce *such general laws*, and reduce them into a system of morality, and why is UNIVERSAL OBEDIENCE to them required? For how then, can such a requisition, be for the *general good*?

The answer, is, plain, and obvious and even familiar. Because, though *more apparent* good, might even arise, from a NON-COMPLIANCE with them, in some *particular* cases; yet, were a *permission* given to each *individual*, to judge for *himself*, *when*, obedience to them, was *proper*, and *when not*; *such* a permission, would be in effect, an ABROGATION of them AS LAWS, and would often authorize the perpetration of murder, adultery, robbery, and every species of injustice, for the *prevention* of which, they were, in ALL CASES intended.

Precisely

Precisely therefore, for the same reason also, it is, that *such* a permission can *not* be granted to *subjects*; which, is not only contended for as a *theoretical truth*, but DEMANDED as the NATURAL UNALIENABLE RIGHT of MAN, and of the PRACTICE of which, *through all it's consequences*, it is affirmed to be an *act of injustice, cruelty, oppression, and tyranny in any government*, to deprive *any*, even the lowest, of it's members. For if it were, the LAWS of the STATE, would likewise, in this case, as the *laws of virtue*, in the former, *be in effect* ANNULLED,—government would be dissolved;—men would again fall into that very *state of nature*, and of ANARCHY, which involves them in infinitely more misery, than, the very WORST FORM of CIVIL GOVERNMENT, can POSSIBLY PRODUCE.

Hence then it follows, that if an human legislature, even *enjoins* it's subjects,
either

either to *omit* any action, of which, by the *laws* of *virtue*, or *religion*, the *omission* appears to them, to be wrong; or *commands* them to *perform* some action, which when brought to the same TEST, *appears* to them to be VICIOUS or WICKED; it does not then become their DUTY to *resist* and *rebel*, but they are bound QUIETLY to *submit* to the *loss* of the seeming good, however great it might be, which they would have obtained, by a *compliance* with the laws; or to any *other* inconvenience or *pain*, which they might sustain, in consequence of *disobedience*. Exactly, as in all other cases whatsoever, where we would regulate our conduct, by the rules of *virtue* or *morality*, whenever any pleasure, or seeming advantage, might be obtained by the *gratification* of the PASSIONS, *such* pleasure and advantage, *must* be *sacrificed*, to the *laws* of *virtue*, and *religion*.

However *wrong* therefore, a legislature may be in *enacting* some laws, yet, the
people

people are still bound to *obey* them, unless such laws are destructive of some particular *constitution*, by making a *breach* in the *compact*, between the GOVERNED and the GOVERNORS; in that PARTICULAR FORM of government; and for *which breach*, that VERY CONSTITUTION has PROVIDED a REMEDY, by AUTHORISING in *such cases*, the PEOPLE'S DISBOEDIENCE. But a *refusal* of *obedience* in the *subjects*, to the ACTS of the LEGISLATURE, much more resistance or rebellion, must be in ALL OTHER CASES, at ALL TIMES, offences of the most complicated guilt, and crimes of the deepest dye. For, the *magnitude* of the *guilt*, must not only be estimated,—by the *uncontroulable violence* of the PASSIONS, in the first, and more immediate agents;—but also, by the *number*, and heinousness of the crimes, of which, *they* are only *mediately*, or even *remotely* the *causes*;—and likewise by the unmeasurable inundation of evils,—which, issuing forth from both

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these

these sources,—raging in a resistless torrent,
—must necessarily overwhelm the whole
kingdom,—in ruin, and desolation.

So truly *trifling*, *false* and *sophistical*,
(and I should add contemptible, but for
fear of giving you offence) are these AR-
GUMENTS, and ALL OTHERS likewise, which,
are founded upon the sandy, or rather
undiscoverable foundation, of the NATU-
RAL RIGHTS OF MEN. Notwithstanding
therefore, the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF
FRANCE, have advanced THEM, as the
FIRST PRINCIPLES OF ALL GOVERNMENT,
in their DECLARATION OF RIGHTS,

Which, now to sense, and now to nonsense, leaning,
Mean not, but blunder round about, a meaning.

and though, even the PEOPLE have SANC-
TIONED *cettes lanternes*, by the penalty of
the *lantern post*; yet, the venerable MINO-
RITY of that motley body, enlisted under
the

the banners of REASON, must ever brand them with reprobation, and reject them with contempt.

To our most sincere wishes, and hopes, therefore, may we not add also, our firm trust, and confidence, that these “*unsubstantial pageants*,” called NATURAL RIGHTS, are now “*dissolved*,” and will be no longer

— *blown with restless violence*
round about the pendant world.

That you, may have time, by considering what has been already said, to form the same hope, breathe the same wish, and attain to the same trust and confidence,—I shall conclude this letter, remaining

Sir,

Yours, &c.

L E T T E R VIII.

SIR,

I HOPE you have had now sufficient leisure, most *maturely* to weigh, the *words*, NATURAL RIGHTS, and to exile them for ever from your mind, to the regions of nonsense; where only they could have their birth, from the union of ERROR, with ANARCHY. For, if those, which are called RIGHTS were NATURAL; —then GOVERNMENT would be UNNATURAL. And if all men claim it, as their NATURAL RIGHT TO DO AS THEY PLEASE, NO GOVERNMENT CAN POSSIBLY EXIST.

The

The only question therefore, which a *subject* can ask himself, under ANY SPECIES OF GOVERNMENT, is *not*, what RIGHTS should, I wish to have, and therefore may claim as INDEFEASIBLE;—but,—

First, WHAT ARE the RIGHTS,—to which,—I am *entitled*, by the CONSTITUTION of the government, under which, I live.

Secondly, whether, such others, as I should *wish* to have,—WOULD be COMPATIBLE with the present *particular* RIGHTS, and *general wishes* and *welfare* of my fellow subjects.

Thirdly, whether I, and those who entertain the same inclinations, and opinions with myself,—are *likely* to obtain them from the legislature, without DISTURBING,—the TRANQUILITY,—PEACE,—and HAPPINESS,—of the society?

For,

For, the GENERAL HAPPINESS of the WHOLE kingdom, is certainly the GRAND END, to which, every *law* should tend; even *more invariably*, than the needle, when touched by the loadstone, does actually turn towards the pole. Where, therefore, under any constitution of government, the legislature enacts any law, which can *impart* a GOOD, to *some*, which they did *not before* enjoy, or *remove* from them, some INCONVENIENCE, which they before sustained,—*without* SUBJECTING the rest, to INJURY OR INCONVENIENCE:—*there*,—the government is IMPROVED.

In such a case, however, the legislature, should most cautiously attend, to the *very wide* distance, there is, between the REMOVAL of an *actual pain*, or positive inconvenience; and the CONFERRING of NEW POWER.

For,

For, to the *former*, a man may be said to have *some claim*, from the laws of morality, and religion. To the *other*, he can not pretend, to set up even any *moral* plea whatsoever; but there may be not only many political, and constitutional, but likewise even some *moral* objections *against* it. So likewise, even in the *removal* only of pain, or some positive inconvenience, the legislature, should not only attend to the *immediate*, but also, to the remoter consequences, which may result from it; as to the probable conversion of the *freedom* from PAST RESTRAINT, into the *acquisition* of FUTURE POWER.

For no argument, can possibly be more absurd, or contradictory, in *any set of men*, even, *supposing* the *fact* to be *true*, upon which they build it; than to pretend,—that they have a *claim* to any such indulgent relaxation, of the rigour of the laws, —*because*, *whilst* they were under *this restraint*,

straint,—they were *quiet* and *peaceable* subjects. As *this*, only proves, that the laws had answered the purpose, for which they were enacted; viz. that of making quiet subjects of those,—who were restless and refractory, before the passing of those laws. But, BECAUSE, it was for the *very purpose* of *producing* this *effect*, that the *restraint* was layed upon them;—FOR THAT VERY *reason*,—their *past loyalty* and *obedience*, under *such* circumstances, however great they might have been,—*can not* possibly, be any PLEDGE, OR SECURITY for their *future conduct*,—*when*,—*that* VERY RESTRAINT,—should be REMOVED.

A more ample, and indisputable illustration, and confirmation, of the *truth* of these observations, *can not* be given,—than that,—with which, you yourself have been so kind as to supply us, in your twelfth letter, page 122.

For

For there you say, "time was when
 "(the Church of England) pretended, to
 "*fear where no fear was*, and being then
 "VIGOROUS,—her cries were heard, *as the*
 "*roaring of a lion*. Of late, she has
 "BEEN SO FEEBLE, that, WE ONLY
 "AMUSE OURSELVES WITH THEM, and
 "*now the DANGER is really TRANSFER-*
 "RED FROM US, TO THEMSELVES."

Now, what does, this very *plain*, and
explicit declaration, amount to,—BUT THIS
 very kind information,—that we were FOOLS,
 to *take away the penal laws*, against you,
 and your friends; for, that YOU, having
 now acquired power,—notwithstanding all
 your *pretences* to liberality of sentiment,
 and christian charity;—to loyalty to the
 King, and love to your Country;—notwith-
 standing your claim to a *monopoly* of all the
wisdom and *virtue* in the kingdom,—WILL
 eagerly seize *every opportunity*, (and you
 go on, to point out the opportunities, which

will be afforded) of USING that VERY POWER,—to the DESTRUCTION of your truly *liberal*, and *generous* benefactors.

Permit me however, from REAL TENDERNESS, to you, and your friends;—do not start,—you may venture to believe it without hesitation, for my conduct has been always firm and manly towards them; (the open opposer of their opinions and doctrines,—but more than once a cordial friend, and warm advocate for the men who held them,) to recommend to you, *more caution*, not only in your declarations of your *future intentions*,—but likewise,—in your *present constant exhibitions*, of your rooted prejudices;—your bigotted animosity,—and your unchristian hatred,—to the *Church of England*,—its *doctrines*,—and its *ministers*. *Persecuting* the latter as you do,—which is, *as far as you can*,—in their literary fame,—wherever, you can get the command of a periodical publication,—however *liberal* they
may

may be in their sentiments, towards *all* other sects. Misrepresenting likewise, those who associate with you, from principles of liberality, and of christian charity,—as courting your company, for the sake of instruction,—and as leaving the society, of their bigotted brethren of the establishment,—from their predilection, for the *more enlarged sentiments* of your sect.

Remember, Sir, that the LION of the forest, also, does not *always* roar,—but may sometimes condescend to suffer, some of the lower tribes of animals, (even perhaps some of that species, which most resemble, and most delight in imitating men,) to play around him,—admit them into some familiarity,—protect them from their most ferocious enemies,—and divert himself with their gambols,—though they should be expressive only of their vanity, and their weakness. But if, from this indulgence, they, growing bold, and petulant, should

mistake his gentleness for supineness,—and his meekness for indifference,—and once more rousing him from his repose,—he does but begin to shake his shaggy mane, and utter his deep-toned roar,—they would instantly be struck aghast with horror,—and in a moment, scramble away to the first cover they could find, small enough, to hide them, from his awakened fury, and tremendous strength.

But, let us lay aside metaphor, and return to the subject, more immediately before us. When, *again*, the executive and legislative powers, GIVE UP any power, with which by the constitution, they happen to be entrusted,—and of which, they are conscious,—the HAPPINESS of the SOCIETY, do not REQUIRE the EXERCISE;—because the *exertion* of it, could only serve to the gratification of the passions, of those, in whom those powers are lodged,—who have their *weaknesses* and *frailties* in

in common with all other men:—in *that* case likewise,—there is,—we say,—an alteration in the government, and a *reformation* in the constitution. The UTMOST CARE, and CAUTION however, must *also* be used on SUCH AN OCCASION, in every constitution, where, the *legislature*, consists of DIFFERENT BRANCHES;—to PREVENT the POWER, which may thus be SURRENDERED by ONE of them, from being TRANSFERRED TO ANY, OR ALL of the OTHERS. For where this is the consequence,—the balance of the constitution,—instead of being *amended*,—may be *totally destroyed*.

In any such cases likewise,—where, the governors of the state, do not of their own accord, pass such laws,—the governed may under *all* the various forms, of different constitutions,—perhaps, without any breach, either of their *moral duty*, or their *obedience* as *subjects*,—petition for alterations;—provided, they do so, with that respect,

respect, which is *always* due from *subjects*, to the *supreme power* in every state;—and quietly SUBMIT, if, *that power* think differently from them,—as to the PROPRIETY, of *granting*, the objects of their petitions. For, from it's decision, there can not possibly be, under *any* government, ANY LAWFUL APPEAL; nor even from it's ERRORS, and it's PREJUDICES, any RIGHTFUL REDRESS.

Very unacceptable, and even disagreeable no doubt, must THESE TRUTHS appear to those of our *modern political innovators*,—who mistake every popular, proposed alteration, for an excellent reformation, in a constitution;—which is,—and long has been, an object of admiration,—to some states, and of envy,—to others.—To those, who deem an edifice to be increasing in beauty, the nearer it approaches, to a mere exhibition of ruins.—To those, who fired by their own enthusiasm, conceive every suggestion

tion of fancy, to be an object of experience.—To those, who more lukewarm in themselves, but heated, by mixing in frequent crouds, receive from, and communicate, the flame of their prejudices, and their passions, to each other.—To those, who however really ignorant they are, yet by a constant reciprocation of flattery, believe themselves to be irradiated with supereminent light, and to be possessed of the utmost store of knowledge.—To those, who not being often admitted under vaulted roofs, mistake the reverberations of their own voices within, for shouts of approbation, from crouds, without.—To those, who,—because hundreds of men, of genuine genius and learning, who live retired in their rural shades, content themselves only with despising their *book-making*, and their *puffing*, (but not chusing to encounter their virulence and abuse, do not reply to them) presume therefore, from the silence of those, who differ from them,

that

that their own opinions, are deemed, to be, incapable of refutation.—To those, who valuing themselves upon their art,—cunning,—and address, though they have not much knowledge of the world, and still less of human nature, fancy, that the real roughness, rudeness, and fierceness of their dispositions, are, not, perceived, on account of the sometimes, affected smoothness, softness, and subtleness of their outward demeanor;—and imagine that where a smile is forced, upon the rigid, unrelaxing muscles of their mouths,—there can be no suspicion, of rancour, rankling in the heart.

In all these,—and such as these characters, however various may be their divisions and subdivisions,—however similar they may be in some features,—and dissimilar in others,—yet in ALL of them,—no doubt, —THESE TRUTHS will almost equally excite displeasure, and perhaps exactly in proportion

proportion to the strength of the arguments in their support, exasperate their resentment.

Yet, though I am unwilling, to be the cause of pain to any one, and if I know my own heart, never intend to excite it, except, when, as I am now bound in duty, for the promotion of the happiness of others:—of so great importance, do I deem these truths to be;—that short as this letter is, I shall here conclude it; that you, and my other readers may have the more time, seriously to consider, and accurately to weigh them;—and attentively to scrutinize into all the *numerous*,—and if neglected,—*dangerous, consequences*,—which follow in their train.

For, however the almost sacred name of LIBERTY, may be used as the denomination, of the darling object of the discontented, under *any form* of government;

Y

it

it is certainly very seldom so employed; but, as a stalking-horse; whilst in reality, the LOVE OF POWER, skulking behind it, affords men an opportunity of aiming at the destruction of every thing, which, whilst it exists, obstructs their selfish inclinations, or by it's extinction, supplies them, with food for their PRIDE,—their AVARICE, —and their AMBITION.

“ O for that warning voice, which he who saw
“ Th’ Apocalypse, heard cry in heaven aloud.”

But if *that*, be not any more permitted to reach the ear of mortals; let BRITONS however, be warned by a voice which now cries *aloud*, and *s pares not*, from the opposite shore. Which, bids the SONS OF ALBION BEWARE, what experiments they try upon their constitution, either in church or state;—bids them BEWARE,—of the FASCINATION from the *well sounding words*,—PHILOSOPHY,—ENLIGHTENED TIMES,—LIBERTY,—and NATURAL RIGHTS;—lest,—
instead

instead of finding the RETURN of a SATURNIAN REIGN,—*they should fall a sacrifice* to AMBITION,—PRIDE,—INJUSTICE,—IGNORANCE,—and BARBARISM, marching in the van;—OR to,—FURY,—CRUELTY,—DESPOTISM,—SLAUGHTER,—and DESOLATION, maddening in the rear.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

Y. 2

LETTER

 L E T T E R IX.

SIR,

HAVING now, not only, I trust, totally DESTROYED every PLEA to the CLAIM of any privileges in society, from the *natural* RIGHTS of men;—having also, I doubt not, for ever *expelled* the words from any future admission, *amongst* the terms, which *appertain* to the SCIENCE of POLITICS;—having likewise I hope, clearly, and evidently traced, the ORIGIN, and PROGRESS of MORAL SCIENCE, through a path, which though neglected by all former writers,—was the only one, in which
 they

they *ought* to have proceeded;—and lastly, —having pointed out the vast care and attention, with which, even *any* reformation ought to be made, in ANY SPECIES of GOVERNMENT;—it seems to me, to be very probable, that in future,—for the terms, NATURAL RIGHTS,—MORAL RIGHTS, will in general be substituted. And perhaps, if NO CAUTION were given to prevent it; the LATTER words, might, at no distant time be used, as the FORMER have long been;—only as *bugbears*, to frighten every one, from *venturing* to *examine* the TRUTH OR FALSEHOOD of any proposition, so entitled; upon the supposition, that ALL POSITIONS which were so CHARACTERISED, *had a* CLAIM from EVERY ONE, to an IMMEDIATE and UNHESITATING ASSENT.

Thus perhaps for instance, it will now be urged,—that as I do, and must admit, that the GENERAL HAPPINESS of the PEOPLE,

PLE, OUGHT to be the FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE of EVERY GOVERNMENT,—and that as I also allow, that there are DIFFERENT FORMS of government, SOME of which, are furnished with BETTER MEANS for that ONE GREAT END, than others;—“therefore,—the MAJORITY, MUST “at ALL TIMES, have a MORAL RIGHT “to change, (for instance) a constitution, “—which, has intrusted an ARBITRARY “POWER, in the hands of ONE MAN,—“FOR ONE,—in which,—a power so liable to be abused,—is CONTROULED, “CHECKED, and REGULATED.”

To prevent however, to the utmost of our power, ALL POSSIBLE ABUSE of the terms, “MORAL RIGHTS,” by using them, without HAVING IDEAS ANNEXED TO THEM,—it is necessary to observe; that when they are applied to any *proposed* ALTERATION, in the INTERNAL GOVERNMENT of a state, the expressions,—MO-

RALLY

RALLY RIGHT,—and POLITICALLY RIGHT are, SYNONYMOUS.

For, THAT change can not be MORALLY right, which is POLITICALLY WRONG; nor politically RIGHT, which is MORALLY WRONG. The GENERAL HAPPINESS, BEING, the ONLY COMMON MEASURE of any one, and the same change;—which, may be by some men, denoted in these different manners.—The WORDS therefore are only different,—but the SENSE of both the expressions, is the SAME.

For, should any one deny this, and say, that it is very easy to *conceive*, MANY CHANGES in governments, which though undoubtedly MORALLY RIGHT, would be POLITICALLY WRONG:—if, we do but advance one step further, and enquire, what is to be understood, by this *pretended distinction*: we shall find it to turn out, to be nothing more,—than *this quibble*;—that
some

some changes, may be conceived to be made in governments, which at CERTAIN TIMES, and under CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, might be MORALLY RIGHT; which, at OTHER *certain times*, and under OTHER *certain circumstances*,—would be,—POLITICALLY WRONG. But then, *still* it will be found, that in THOSE SEASONS, and on THOSE OCCASIONS, WHEN they would be MORALLY; they *would* also, be POLITICALLY right; and on the contrary, and so always interchangeably, that at THOSE SEASONS, and upon THOSE OCCASIONS, that they *would* be POLITICALLY,—they *would* also be, MORALLY WRONG.

But in answer to the particular position just stated; it must be observed, that considering it, in the light, either of an UNIVERSAL OR GENERAL PROPOSITION, no one can possibly be MORE FALSE; as evidently follows, from EVERY PROOF, which has been ALREADY ESTABLISHED.

But,

But, that *there* MAY be CASES SUPPOSED, in which, the people might lawfully change an arbitrary form of government, into a more limited one, BECAUSE, there MAY BE CASES, where, such an act, would be no infringement of any man's RIGHT, nor occasion an *injury* to any man, —I am ready to grant.

Thus for instance, let us suppose a case, in which, a *tyrant*, by *death*, or *some other cause* of INCAPACITY, not only lets fall, but can never be able again, to resume the reins of government; and that the constitution has not established any settled rule of succession. Here, the appointment of a successor, being left dependent upon the choice of the people,—no doubt, the position is *so far true*, that in such a case, the *electors may*,—because, *no right* is infringed,—change the constitution.

For, the *government* is then for a *moment dissolved*; and the multitude are returned to their *original state of nature*. If then, they desire again to live in a state of CIVIL SOCIETY, and GOVERNMENT, which they *will* wish to do, if they have retained their senses:—they certainly *may* either appoint another governor, with the *same* powers, as were intrusted to the *former*, only making choice of *one*, whom they deem to be a *wiser*, and a *better* man;—or, by appointing *others*, either to some *participation* in his power, or indeed, by dividing the *whole* of it, either amongst *some few*, or a GREAT MANY in number, hope, and endeavour to escape the evils which arose, as they think, from placing the *despotic* or *arbitrary power*, which MUST ALWAYS EXIST SOMEWHERE,—in the hands of ONLY ONE MAN.

In such a case, no doubt the people do not do wrong, and may do right in attempting

attempting to *new-model* the government; because, they *are* then, *precisely* in the same situation, except having had the advantage of experience, in which, they were,—when they *at first* agreed to institute a government. Though it must be observed, that even in this instance, the *innocuousness* of such an attempt, is altogether limited to those cases, where the new form can be modelled, without ANARCHY, and CONFUSION; and the CONSEQUENT CRIMES, which are attendant upon such a state. The PREVENTION of which, is the GRAND BLESSING of EVERY FORM of GOVERNMENT, and RENDERS the WORST, INFINITELY PREFERABLE, to NONE.

But in any OTHER case,—that is to say,—whilst the government *actually exists*,—they can not for the reasons, which I have assigned above, have any RIGHT,—but MUST DO WRONG, to DISSOLVE the government,—and revert to a state of na-

ture, upon EVERY PRINCIPLE WHATSOEVER,—upon which,—either GOVERNMENT, or the LAWS of VIRTUE or MORALITY, CAN POSSIBLY BE FOUNDED. For, a majority, has NO MORE RIGHT, to TRANSGRESS ANY of THOSE LAWS, nor consequently “TO DO EVIL THAT GOOD MAY “COME OF IT,” than, *any* SINGLE INDIVIDUAL: But, in a state of REBELLION, or of WAR,—it is CERTAIN that “EVIL “MUST be DONE,”—though it be quite UNCERTAIN, whether,—“ANY GOOD will “COME OF IT.”

The *first method*, which I have assigned, in the foregoing case, which I have supposed,—from which,—the people may hope to have a *better* government, arise out of the ashes of the former;—was most probably, the *first experiment*, which was tried. They resolved to use, and probably did exercise the utmost care, caution, and circumspection, as they thought, in the selection

lection and choice of a *new* governor. But, such were the evils, which attended even *such* a *temporary*, though scarcely more than a *momentary* RELAPSE into a STATE of NATURE, and of ANARCHY, that repeated trials soon taught them,—that it was MUCH WORSE for mankind, to INCUR the CERTAIN EVIL, than even, to risk a *chance*, after the UNCERTAIN GOOD.

From further reflection and experience, they were no long time in learning,—that neither the MANY, nor EVEN the FEW, had WISDOM or VIRTUE enough, to raise the HIGHEST WISDOM, and the GREATEST VIRTUE, to the most exalted rank, and most extensive power.

From hence then, they concluded,—as they were well warranted by their knowledge of facts, and perfectly authorised by the conclusions of their reason, that an HEREDITARY SUCCESSION, was not only
best

best calculated for the avoidance of the miseries, they had sustained by so tumultuous an election, but likewise, for the acquisition of that good, at which they had aimed, by their solicitude in the CHOICE.

In *some* other cases perhaps, though certainly in *much* fewer, men have seized the opportunity, which, the *dissolution* of the government gave them, to adopt, *one*, or *other*, of the *other* METHODS I have mentioned; though EXPERIENCE, has CERTAINLY SHOWN, that it has, VERY SELDOM been attended with *much* *melioration*, of their *condition*. For, the ABSOLUTE POWER STILL EXISTS, though it be ever so much divided, and subdivided; and though therefore in these cases, there must indeed be an UNION of WILLS, before it can bring OPPRESSION upon the PEOPLE, —yet, it frequently happens, (as there are always *motives* existing to *form* such an union) that when formed, it wields an

iron

iron rod of oppression, so extensive in length, and so destructive by it's weight;—that the hand of ONE man, could not even raise, much less, direct it.

But in most cases, where, a CONSTITUTION has been formed, which AMPLY provides CHECKS, and CONTROLS, upon both the LEGISLATIVE, and EXECUTIVE POWERS of the government, for the production of the *greatest possible general happiness*;—it has rather been the effect, of what we *foolishly* call ACCIDENT, than of any SETTLED DESIGN, OR REGULAR ADAPTATION OF MEANS TO ENDS.* Partly occasioned by the ebullitions of men's passions, which at the time, no reason could justify, though even from them, good was afterwards educed; and when therefore, the first agents were criminal, though their actions,

* See my *Sermon* on the KING'S RECOVERY.

actions were beneficial. And partly, by events, of which no human sagacity could foresee even their birth, and certainly much less, their consequences.

TO SUCH CAUSES, under the direction of heaven, do we, for the most part owe, OUR OWN MOST EXCELLENT CONSTITUTION, the parts of which, are upon the whole, so nicely balanced, and regularly adjusted; that, the COMMUNITY has nothing to fear, from any UNCONTROULLED TYRANNY of the EXECUTIVE POWER, though it is HEREDITARY, under CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS; nothing to dread,—from any unavoidable IGNORANCE, or rather CAPRICE, in the legislature;—nor any thing to tremble at, from the UNRULY PASSIONS, and LICENTIOUS WILLS of the PEOPLE. The *lower ranks of society*, owe *their security*, to the *share* intrusted to *numbers of them*, in the CHOICE of ONE of the CONSTITUENT PORTIONS of the
LEGISLATURE;

LEGISLATURE; and the WHOLE SOCIETY is indebted for IT'S PRESERVATION, to the EXCLUSION of the MULTITUDE, from the POWER of MAKING LAWS, in themselves; and the INTRUSTING SUFFICIENT FORCE in the EXECUTIVE POWER, to COMPEL THEM to OBEY those, which are made by the persons, in whom, that power is vested;—whether, according to the people's OWN CONCEPTIONS of them, they HAPPEN, either to be APPROVED, or DISAPPROVED.

The more effectually however, to secure an attention in the legislature, to THE PEOPLE'S RIGHTS,—their INTEREST,—and their HAPPINESS;—they at stated intervals, have an OPPORTUNITY of REMOVING THOSE REPRESENTATIVES from their TRUST, who have given assent to laws, which, after the CONSTITUENTS have had TIME for COOL REFLECTION, they can not bring themselves to like; and have

a RIGHT to CHOOSE others, who MAY, if THEY PLEASE, RESCIND these laws, disliked by any of their electors. But, if a *majority* of the *new-elected* representatives, do not agree to annul them, those who shall *continue* to disapprove the laws, are *as much* bound to *obey them*, as those, from whom, they receive the MOST CORDIAL ASSENT.

THIS, is, a DUTY which arises, not only from the PARTICULAR FORM of THIS CONSTITUTION; but, from the GENERAL PRINCIPLE, COMMON to ALL governments. For though OUR CONSTITUTION, has indeed DEFINED, WHAT PERSONS are to CONSTITUTE the legislature,—the obedience which is due, to the MAJORITY of the TWO HOUSES, with the CONSENT of the KING, does not arise, either from the NATURE, OR NUMBER of the persons, constituting it;—but from the VERY CIRCUMSTANCE, of it's BEING the
LEGISLATURE.

LEGISLATURE. For otherwise;—a MAJORITY of the WHOLE PEOPLE, either by their representatives, or even in their own persons, have NO MORE RIGHT, though they MAY have MORE POWER, to controul a *single individual*;—than *any individual* has to CONTRoul ANOTHER. However EXCELLENT therefore, such a constitution of the legislature may be, the OBEDIENCE DUE to it, *does NOT* arise FROM THAT EXCELLENCE;—but, because, from the NATURE of ALL GOVERNMENTS, however DIFFERENT in their CONSTRUCTION, OBEDIENCE IS UNIVERSALLY DUE TO EVERY LEGISLATURE.

In SUCH a FORM of GOVERNMENT indeed, if, a law be proposed, by *one* part of the legislature, the DUTY of the other TWO PARTS, is, *first* to enquire,—whether the *proposed law* be CONSONANT with the CONSTITUTION, before they determine upon it's *expedience*. For to them, is in-

trusted the *preservation* of EVERY PART of the CONSTITUTION; but NOT by any means to the PEOPLE at large;—any further,—than THEIR CHOICE of REPRESENTATIVES, has a TENDENCY, to *that* END. And, it is by so excellent a provision, (I mean) the *not* allowing any OTHER APPEAL to the people, than THIS, nor any appeal from them, but by *petitions*;—that, whilst by these means,—a defence from OPPRESSION, is PROVIDED FOR THE PEOPLE;—STABILITY is SECURED to the GOVERNMENT.

For, whatever may be the authority, which advances the *contrary* opinion, and however often it may have been already, and may again hereafter be repeated,—that the PEOPLE of ENGLAND, have by the REVOLUTION, acquired,—the THREE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS of “*choosing their own governors,*” —of “*cashiering them for misconduct,*”—and, of “*framing a new government;*”—SUCH POSITIONS are as *false* in point of *fact*,
as

as they are *repugnant* to every *just conception* of *sound policy*:—if, by the *people* be meant,—the *general* BULK of the COMMUNITY; and if the assertors of this doctrine, DO NOT MEAN THIS,—and do not most benevolently intend to teach it, even to the very dregs of the people,—of which I dare to say, they never heard a word, 'till very lately,—they certainly mean NOTHING.

For the PEOPLE at large, had no interference whatsoever, in the SETTLEMENT made at that Æra;—NO APPEAL was made to them;—and their opinions were not ASKED. But, the REVOLUTION has indeed ESTABLISHED a PRINCIPLE, of the UTMOST IMPORTANCE, and of the HIGHEST consequence. Which, however it may be disputed by the FEW, or the MANY, appears to me, to be able to stand like a rock, unshaken by all the buffetings of winds

winds and waves, amidst the most tumultuous agitation of the ocean.

The PRINCIPLE, I mean, IS THIS. That, *when*, the EXECUTIVE POWER, which is the ONLY ONE, which can be EXTINCT, becomes so by INCAPACITY, ABDICATION, OR FORFEITURE, in *consequence* of *that* power, ACTING CONTRARY to the FUNDAMENTAL, and ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLES of the CONSTITUTION,—THEN,—in THAT CASE, the WHOLE POWER of the GOVERNMENT, DEVOLVES upon the TWO REMAINING BRANCHES of THE LEGISLATURE, SO FAR indeed, and NO FURTHER,—as to give THEM a RIGHT to SUPPLY the VACANCY, in that PARTICULAR CASE, by APPOINTING ANOTHER EXECUTIVE POWER, in as short a time AS POSSIBLE, and in a MANNER, as CONSENTANEOUS with the USUAL MODE of SUCCESSION, as the PARTICULAR NATURE of the CASE, WILL ADMIT.

By

By this MOST EXCELLENT PROVISION, —the CONSTITUTION therefore, is SECURED against VIOLATION, from the exertion of any UNLAWFUL AUTHORITY, in the KING, which might either alter it, or convert it into an ABSOLUTE MONARCHY;—and it is likewise shielded from the interposition, of any LICENTIOUS EXERCISE in the PEOPLE,—which might either destroy it, by ANARCHY, or change it into a DEMOCRACY. But moreover, at the same time, that this *admirable provision*,—the establishment of which,—we owe to the REVOLUTION,—*produces these inestimable benefits*, by guarding against both tyranny and licentiousness,—it is itself, also prevented from even *verging* towards ABUSE, from another MOST IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE of the constitution; which, totally PROHIBITS and PREVENTS, the EXERCISE of any SUCH power, in the *ordinary* VACANCY of the throne by DEATH. For it DOES NOT even ADMIT of the IDEA, of
 SUCH

SUCH a VACANCY;—but MAINTAINS,—that the KING NEVER DIES,—or,—in other words,—that, the THRONE IS NEVER VACANT; whilst, an HEREDITARY SUCCESSOR, in a CERTAIN LINE EXISTS.

From these premises, then, it necessarily follows, that WHOEVER maintains, in *general* terms, that the PEOPLE have, in any SUCH CASES, the RIGHT of CASHIERING their governors, and of CHOOSING *other* governors,—and of FORMING what government they please,—must, upon this most important event, either manifest the GROSSEST DECEPTION, in the assertions themselves.—or,—which,—I am sure, I do not believe to have been the case,—betray in them, the MOST CRIMINAL INTENTION, to DECEIVE others.

SUCH is the PROVISION, which our admirable *constitution*, has framed to secure LIBERTY to the PEOPLE, and STABILITY

to the GOVERNMENT. To which ends, the RIGHTS, which the PEOPLE POSSESS,—the POWERS which they EXERCISE,—the LIMITS, in which, they are CONFINED, and,—the OBLIGATION, by which,—they are BOUND TO OBEY the LAWS,—are EQUALLY CONDUCTIVE.

That under *such a constitution*, men according to their different degrees of knowledge, and extent of their capacities, MAY OFTEN DIFFER IN OPINION, concerning the *tendency* of a law, as to the *general good* of the governed, or its *consistency* with the *principles* of our *particular form* of government,—can excite no surprise. But to hear it asserted,—as we often do,—that,—there can be *no good constitution* of government,—where,—the *people* themselves *do not give their assent* to the laws, which they are bound to obey;—and,—to be almost deafened, by the sounds of the NATURAL RIGHTS of men, which contain,

two incompatible ideas ;—must necessarily astonish every man,—who does not YIELD to WORDS, instead of ARGUMENTS,—and, who does not mistake, VULGAR OPINIONS, for DEMONSTRATED TRUTHS. For who, that has at all exercised his INTELLECT in investigations, into the NATURE OF MAN, but, must see, that *such doctrines*, have not the *slightest* foundations to rest upon, in HUMAN NATURE? And, can *such* a man, though possessed of the greatest candour,—deem the publishers, and disseminators of *such opinions*, to be any other, than the most superficial of readers, and the most unqualified of writers ;—as men,—who content themselves with the perusal of treatises upon POLITICS, merely for the sake of spouting in conversation, or, of manufacturing a book for the public ;—as men,—who have assumed the task of teaching others, what they themselves had never learned ;—as men,—who might have read politics FOR AN AMUSEMENT,—but who had

had never received the aid of a single ray of judgment, reasoning, or thought, to guide them in their enquiry into it, AS A SCIENCE;—as men therefore,—guilty of the highest presumption, conceit, and arrogance,—in DICTATING,—(whilst, they were thus IGNORANT, of the VERY FIRST PRINCIPLES OF LEGISLATION,)—LAWS TO LEGISLATORS;—and lastly as men,—*some of whom*, are chargeable, either with the most confirmed folly, or the highest criminality, for their ignorance, or contempt of the DUTY of SUBJECTS, by frequently uttering threats (if all their wishes be not gratified) of overthrowing;—and rejoicing by anticipation, in the destruction, of that government,—to which, they owe the greatest gratitude for it's past indulgencies, and which is entitled, to their sincerest affection, and highest reverence, for the meekness and mildness, with which it bears their utmost virulence of abuse,—upon every

part,—both of it's CIVIL, and ECCLESIASTICAL CONSTITUTION.

Those likewise, who have REALLY STUDIED POLITICS AS A SCIENCE, must also be surpris'd, and astonish'd at the absurdity, which they every day see, of some men, who perhaps, would condemn *adoration* of GOD, as SUPERSTITION, and HOMAGE to the KING, as slavery; yet, boasting of themselves, and glorying in being the *mere echoes*, of some *few individuals*, or the bigotted tools of some party:—Of even others taking pride, and assuming consequence to themselves, from being enlisted under the banners of one or other of THOSE DIVISIONS, which are *not* denominated, by any appellation, which marks out any conformity with their sentiments, or suitableness to their opinions;—but, only—by the *mean and contemptible terms* of *reproach*,—WHIGS and TORRIES.

To

To every man, who at all reflects, on the NATURE OF OUR CONSTITUTION; PRIDE OR SELF-COMPLACENCY, or even SELF-APPROBATION, derived from such nominal distinctions as these, must appear to him, to be as perfectly ridiculous, as they would be in men, who were delighted with the appellation,—of MY LORD;—when it was only a *vulgar* NICKNAME given to them,—because,—they were *crook-backed*.

EACH of these parties, indeed boast, that THEY are the ONLY REAL PATRIOTS, and TRUE LOVERS of their country; and each on the contrary, CONDEMN their opponents, as it's very worst foes, and bitterest enemies.

But, that not either of them is, more deserving of the former appellations, than the other, is clearly evident from this circumstance; that however *different* may be

be their colours,—yet, *both* are dressed in *liveries*, and both therefore exhibit the *badges* of their *slavery*.

For notwithstanding, the vaunted, vast *redundance* of *modern light*, I must confess, I can *not see*, how any men can with justice, be called *true patriots and lovers* of *their country*, who are *not* sincerely attached to *IT'S LAWS*, and the *WHOLE* of *IT'S CONSTITUTION*. Certainly therefore, *THOSE* can not merit those titles, who from their predilections, for *different* and *opposite parts* of it, would *hazard*, the *destruction* of *THE WHOLE*. Consequently likewise, therefore not *THOSE*; who in their parti-coloured clothes, are each eagerly watching opposite scales, that they may seize an opportunity of throwing an *additional* weight, into that of their favourite side; and by that means make it to preponderate. But it appears to me, that they only are entitled to those most honourable

nourable appellations, who, being attached to *no party*, really admire the perfect æquilibrium of the present opposite weights; and watch with anxiety, lest even the minutest thing; any, even the lightest particle of dust, should be thrown into either;—which, alone would be sufficient, to give a partial inclination to either side, of so nicely a polished beam, vibrating upon its centre of motion, at the slightest touch.

But, perhaps it will be asked;—how, the foregoing *opinions*, which have been shown to be *thus inconsistent* with REASON, and TRUE SCIENCE,—could possibly at any time, spring up in the world. And how more especially, could they be so abundantly propagated, and cherished in an *age*,—in which, numbers of writers, compliment their cotemporaries, and indeed it must be confessed, at the same time themselves; by blazoning it forth, as the *wisest*, and most *enlightened* age, which ever adorned

ed the annals of this nation, or even, ever illuminated this terrestrial hemisphere?

Fully, to give an answer to this question, would require an accurate investigation, of the *growth* and *progress* of literature in *this century*,—as connected,—with the *foregoing*. An investigation, to which, if leisure be allowed me, I may perhaps, *hereafter*, give some attention, as it has, no very distant connection, with, “AN EN-
“QUIRY INTO THE IMPEDIMENTS TO HU-
“MAN KNOWLEDGE.” A subject which, *very* early in life engaged my enquiries, and which, for almost thirty years, has never ceased altogether to be, the object, of my investigation.

But, to assign *some* of the *proximate* causes, is not at any time very difficult; and may now, perhaps, be attended with some benefit.

First,

First, then;—because,—most of the governments of *Europe*, in which, *science* flourishes, have been *monarchies*, and not *republics*.

Few *political* writers therefore, have considered the *various inconveniences*, which must necessarily be involved in *every plan* devised, and executed, by such fallible creatures, as *men*; and some of which, though different in *kind*, must therefore appertain to *every species* of government. For this reason then, it was natural for politicians, more attentively to mark, and more accurately to describe, the inconveniences produced by *that form* of government, under which they lived, and of which, they had actual experience, than those evils, which, existing under constitutions, to which they were strangers, could only be made known to them, by vague reports, and disputable information. Hence then, it necessarily follows, from a principle common to the *sen-*

ses, the *imagination*, and the *intellect*;—that the one set of objects, because near, would appear enlarged beyond their real dimensions; and the others would be represented, as diminished even to miniatures. A line therefore, in the second satire of Horace, will inform us, why under these circumstances, men would *hastily* wish to live in a state, which really approaches in the next degree, to NO GOVERNMENT at all; rather, than to remain the subjects of a government, which may be classed under any SPECIES of MONARCHY. The line begins,—*Dum vitant, &c.*—But,—VERBUM, SAT SAPIENTI.

Secondly, because,—in early youth, all our ideas of LIBERTY, are so associated with the *republican form* of government; and we are then so captivated, with the gay and gaudy colours of the eloquence, with which they are tinted;—that,—even,
—when

—when we are MEN, we are not *willing* to reflect, upon the evils, which, they produced; and of which, a very flight attention to the faithful records of history, would give us a full, but melancholy conviction.

For, if we mark with any observation, the history of the REPUBLIC OF ATHENS, we shall find,—that the adjudications of the people, were, for the most part, denunciations of vengeance, against those great men, who had rendered the most essential services to the state; and who by their *wisdom*, and *virtue*, reflect the highest honour upon themselves, and their country.

So likewise, if we recollect, the rise, the progress, and declension of the people of ROME;—we shall discover,—that, having been fascinated, by the *external* splendor of the state, during the times of the republic; we had forgotten the perpetual, in-

ternal dissensions, by which it was constantly agitated. And, struck with horror, at some particularly flagrant acts of wickedness, committed by some of those wretches, who, though ROMAN EMPERORS, were the vilest of the human species,—and *blots* on human nature;—that we had buried in oblivion,—the contentions,—wars,—proscriptions,—and massacres,—which, though more horrible in their effects, and more extensive in their operations, were perpetrated, during the continuance of the state, under the FORM of a REPUBLIC.

Thirdly, because, though the TRUE DOCTRINE, of the UNIVERSAL DUTY OF SUBJECTS TO OBEY THEIR GOVERNORS, has been frequently maintained; yet,—it was upon WRONG PRINCIPLES only, that it has been hitherto defended.

For, nothing is more common, in the progressions of science, than to behold,

TRUE

TRUE OPINIONS *admitted in one age*,—though supported by BAD ARGUMENTS;—and the same true opinions, *rejected in the NEXT*, only because, they had not before been founded upon *just principles*. And on the contrary, it is not less frequent, to see opinions, received, from the supposed *strength* of the proofs, by which, they are proped;—when;—upon a *further* examination, —THOSE VERY OPINIONS, are not only discovered by *other* arguments to be FALSE in THEMSELVES; but, the *proofs* also, which had been applied to them, are found, to be so exceedingly weak, as to be totally incapable, of sustaining the weight, they had been provided, to support.

Fourthly, because, in this nation, the arguments in defence of the *conclusions*, I have deduced, were before not only, NOT taken from the FIRST PRINCIPLES, which I have now drawn FRESH, I trust, from the WELL of TRUTH, and from which, as

a GENERAL SOURCE,—ALL *governments*, I have shown, originally flow. But *those principles* which had been produced by others, were not only extremely impure in themselves, but were likewise rendered *putrid*, by a mixture of certain *phlogistic* ideas, of the *nature* of government in GENERAL, and of *our* OWN CONSTITUTION in PARTICULAR;—such as the *JUS DIVINUM*, and HEREDITARY INDEFEASIBLE RIGHTS of KINGS, &c. Evident however as this is, —numbers perhaps, enveloped as they are in *prejudices*, will obstinately REJECT MINE TOO, AS UNWHOLESOME,—without employing even either their eyes, or their taste, in the ATTEMPT TO DISCOVER, how totally *they* differ from those, which they have formerly reprobated, and long since regorged.

Fifthly, because, even, the PRINCIPLES of the REVOLUTION, have been by many, if not by most men, totally misunderstood.

For

For *that event*, has been generally imagined, if not universally believed, to have *sprung* from the RIGHTS, COMMON TO ALL MANKIND; under EVERY SPECIES, and FORM of government. From this mistake therefore, Sir, of your *master*, Mr. Locke, and your other teachers, who were *first his pupils*, *that event*, has been repeatedly cited, and reiteratedly boasted of, not only as a LESSON, but also an EXAMPLE of INSTRUCTION, TO ALL OTHER NATIONS. It having been constantly pointed out to *other* states, as an object of IMITATION, for the conduct, THEY OUGHT to pursue, whenever the emotions of the governed, shall be in discord, with the sentiments of the governors. Whereas, in reality,—the PRINCIPLES of the *revolution*, were only a GLORIOUS MANIFESTATION, of the PARTICULAR RIGHTS of BRITONS: (so far as I have above explained THEM to extend)—IMPARTED, by the LAWS,—
and

and strengthened by the PECULIAR FRAME,
—of the ENGLISH CONSTITUTION.

Sixthly, there were, TWO OTHER CAUSES, which occasioned a very ready admission, and general reception to the doctrines, opposite to those, which I have been introducing, and supporting. *These are*, the almost universal passions, of PRIDE and AMBITION; though the one, is sometimes cloathed, even in the plain garb of humility, and the other, often retires far distant, from courts and palaces.

For, as I have before observed, the VERY SAME PASSIONS,—which,—PROMPT men,—*when*, in POWER,—to become TYRANTS;—INSTIGATE likewise the SAME, OR OTHER MEN,—*when*,—OUT OF POWER,—to turn REBELS.

It is evident therefore, that from the prevalence of these two passions, NO DOC-

TRINES

TRINES could be more acceptable, to the
 MAJORITY of mankind, than the notions,
 with which, LOCKE, and *other writers*
 upon government, have flattered them;—
 I mean,—in respect to their PERFECT
 ORIGINAL EQUALITY with *those*, who are
 now by their rank *elevated* above, and by
 their power, are placed in *authoritiy* over
 them. This position, must in itself alone,
 have afforded them great satisfaction. But,
 the INFERENCE, which, they could not
 fail to draw from the premises,—prompted
 as they were, by the passions of human
 nature,—must have imparted to them, a
 still greater pleasure. For the deduction
 from hence, was so obvious, that they
 could not possibly overlook it, especially,
 when instigated by *pride* and *ambition*;
 and therefore they immediately, and in-
 deed, supposing the truth of the position,
 —very justly inferred,—that the only *pro-*
per reform in ALL governments,—is,—to
 RESTORE that PRISTINE state of things,—

either altogether, or at least so far,—as THEIR OWN CLASSES ARE CONCERNED, and all others are affected, who hold those political tenets; which, whoever can repeat by rote, is deemed to be, as complete in ALL WISDOM, as even the STOICS WISE MAN; and as SUPEREMINENT in GOODNESS, as that CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER,—who, *Pope* says,—was possessed, of “*every virtue under heaven.*”

From these notions however, it must be confessed, there arises such an idea of their own *self-importance*, and *dignity of character* in adopting them, and such a full blown conceit, of their own SUPERIOR WISDOM, and of their own UNPARALLELED VIRTUE in maintaining them;—that the flame of ambition, sometimes breaks forth into open view: And these philosophers, as they boast themselves to be,—can not sometimes forbear, even in defiance of prudence, to BETRAY their
EXPECTATION,

EXPECTATION,—that notwithstanding, they may at *first* endeavour to RAISE:—They HOPE however, SOON AGAIN TO DISPERSE, this *rain-bowed—coloured bubble*, of EQUALITY.

For, constant experience teaches us, that there is not ANY CLASS of men, who, under the *present* existing governments, are so tenacious of their *real* rank, as these ADVOCATES for EQUALITY, are of their *fancied* one; which in their own estimation, they not only appreciate as due to their worth; but which, they on all occasions, with no little anxiety to themselves, and inconvenience to others, assume;—contrary to all the rules of law,—custom,—prescription,—courtesy,—and good manners. THEY, truly,—*disdain* to show any respect to TITLES;—they pay their homage,—only to MERIT; and being in *their own* opinion, possessed of a *monopoly* of all the WISDOM, and VIRTUE in the world, they very easily conclude, that

THEY ARE THEMSELVES ALONE, ENTITLED to the very HIGHEST RANK. So incautious are they from confidence, or so ignorant are they of mankind, as to imagine;—that other men, will believe them to be the SINCERE advocates, for an EQUALITY of CONDITIONS; because,—they show that they HATE *that* rank and power in *others*, which, *they do not themselves* POSSESS; though whatever privilege or *authority*, they *may happen* TO HAVE, they convert into *tyranny* over those, who *have it not*.

If therefore, by stepping forth as *pretended champions*, for an *equality* of ranks, they could *really overturn*, the present established systems of government;—with all the rash inexperience of PHAETON, they fancy,—they should soon seat themselves in the chariot, and direct the horses of the sun;—and with all *his* blind confidence, they imagine, they should then gloriously illuminate, the whole system of the world.

Though

Though better would it be for *them now*, as it would *before*, have been likewise, for their *kindred-minded philosophers* in FRANCE, —to be *warned*,—rather by *his example*;—than fired by his *ambition*. Left it should be thought necessary, that *they*, like *him*,—should be destroyed by lightning;—as the only resource left,—for the preservation of all the other regions of the earth, from a general conflagration.

I must however, do these gentlemen the *justice* to confess, that there is *another consequence* of the passions, which, are the *causes*, of their blind credulity, in the *belief* of their political doctrines,—their pertinacious bigotry in the assertion of them,—and their rooted antipathy to all who oppose them;—which they have never discerned, and of which, therefore, they are totally unconscious.

For

For it is evident, that exactly in proportion as *such doctrines*, are adapted, to gratify the passions I have just mentioned,—they must in the generality of mankind,—necessarily *excite emotions of pleasure and delight*.

But however, well acquainted these *profound politicians*, may be, with the analysis of the particles of bodies;—yet, as they are perfectly unpracticed, in the analysis of the sentiments of the mind;—and but very little accustomed, even to the PERCEPTION OF TRUTH;—they must therefore, necessarily MISTAKE in *this* instance, which the *unreflecting multitude* do in *all* cases,—the PLEASURABLE EBULLITIONS arising, from the PASSIONS,—for,—the INTELLECTUAL EMOTIONS, which in reality, belong only, to the DEMONSTRATION OF SCIENCE.

And, hence it is, that we so often hear them, vaunting of their RATIONAL NOTIONS,

ONS, and LIBERAL OPINIONS;—whilst they themselves, are totally ignorant of their *true origin*, and *real source*.—For, it is evident, that, *the former epithet*, can not, by any means, belong to *their* notions or their opinions,—as arising, from a *deep* enquiry into the FIRST PRINCIPLES,—and an *accurate* examination of the PRIMARY DEFINITION,—upon which,—they are founded; and from which, they are deduced, by a nice and accurate concatenation of proofs;—which,—is the ONLY PROCESS,—by which,—ANY *notions*, can possibly have a *legitimate* claim, to the *title* of RATIONAL. This is manifest, from this plain and well known fact, that at the very moment, they are boasting of their *superior* powers of *reasoning*, they are almost always betraying the lamentable poverty, and miserable emptiness, of their argumentative stores. As indeed, almost every *single page*, of *these letters*, *sufficiently* proves.

So

So likewise, in reference to the LIBERALITY, of their notions or opinions, it is *equally manifest*, that they can not set up their claim to *this* title, from *their liberality* of sentiments, towards those, who differ from them. Nor, from *their freedom* from *prejudices*, either *against other* men's opinions, or in *favour of their own*. Because, whilst they are in the very act of boasting, of the *liberality* of *their own* sentiments, they are frequently, at the very instant, so *grossly abusing*, that CIVIL and RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENT, to which, they are themselves indebted, for *toleration* and *protection*; so as to leave us totally at a loss to determine, which, is the most wonderful;—the FORBEARANCE of the one party, or the INGRATITUDE of the other. In one respect however, the conduct of the latter, is perfectly consistent, and their assertions are equally true. For, whilst they represent the doctrines of their opponents, as so *abhorrent* from REASON, and COM-

MON SENSE, that they need NO REFUTATION; they COMMAND the world, upon their IPSE DIXIT, to BELIEVE; that *their* OWN OPINIONS, are so SELF-EVIDENT, as to REQUIRE NO ARGUMENT, for *their* support.

These are facts, which have likewise been in no small degree apparent, in the course of THESE LETTERS; but the reader can only see them in their brightest colours, and their really gigantic dimensions, by a careful inspection, of these authors OWN WRITINGS.

These circumstances, then, afford *another proof*, of the truth of my foregoing position,—that,—the CAUSES of their other erroneous opinions, and of their fancied superiority, in *rational* and *liberal* notions, can only, really originate from the operations,—though as I am ready to allow, unperceived by themselves,—of pride, va-

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nity, and ambition. And indeed, I am extremely glad, that TRUTH warrants this conclusion. For I would much rather, impute their mistakes to a *neglected education*, than to any *original inferiority*, in their understandings.

Impelled therefore, by these emotions, or passions, most gladly, would they assume the government, of *all* the kingdoms of the earth. But as unfortunately for them, not even the empire over *one* of them, *as*, they are *now constituted*, is likely to fall to their share;—the *next degree* of *pleasure*, which they can receive;—is,—from STRIPPING *governors*, as much as they can, of all *power* of *controul* over THEM, AS SUBJECTS. For, *this* they know, would not only in the *next degree*, best gratify their inclinations, but may perhaps,—they think,—pave the way in time,—to *their own* acquisition of power, and authority;—and therefore, they term all these
levelling

levelling principles, not only the *most*, but the *only* RATIONAL NOTIONS of government.

Of the EFFECTS of such principles, we may see the PROOFS in the *philosophers* in FRANCE, who loudly also pleaded, for an EQUALITY of conditions.—But who likewise we find, by no means, intended to *humble themselves*, to the rank of those, who were *before* in the classes *below* THEM;—and thus by sharing, to alleviate *their* burthens.—No far from it.—For *this* they knew, would be to imbibe the *true spirit*, of that *detestable superstition*,—as they term it, which others call CHRISTIANITY: But, in conformity with the *more enlightening inspiration* of PHILOSOPHY; they as soon as possible, hurled from their seats,—ALL THOSE,—who had been *before* elevated *above* THEM,—that they might partake, of the plunder of their power, and their wealth;—and thus, have forced themselves,

—for a time at least, by *art*,—into a height,—far above *that* LEVEL,—to which, by the properties, given to them by nature, they are fitted to rise; and to which, they must again by the laws of gravity, soon, once more sink.

So also, in respect to their *religious* opinions. Finding that they have *no* probability at present, of *establishing their own*; —as the *next* step, which would be most acceptable to them, they endeavour to persuade the world, that the TRUTH or NATURE of any *particular* religion, or, the sentiments of it's *various sects*, have not the REMOTEST CONNECTION, with the HAPPINESS of the STATE; and that, as *religion*, is of NO USE in CONDUCTING to CIVIL HAPPINESS; it OUGHT to have no kind of INFLUENCE upon it, whatsoever. And consequently therefore, that the LEGISLATURE has NO RIGHT to INTERMEDDLE in it's concerns, nor even to

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THINK of any means, which may conduce to it's ESTABLISHMENT, OR PROPAGATION.

From hence then, it follows, in their opinion; that,—NO MAN'S NOTIONS OR ACTIONS, are REALLY LIBERAL, who treat,—with the *utmost candour, mildness, forbearance, and brotherly charity*,—ALL who differ from *him ever so much*, in RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS;—but, that HE is the *only truly liberal man*, who, with the *utmost violence, virulence, and even ungentleman-like licentiousness*, vilifies ALL, who, *will not* MAINTAIN with THEM,—that men's *notions* of religion, are matters of PERFECT INDIFFERENCE, to the WELFARE of SOCIETY.

The CONSEQUENCES, which NECESSARILY follow, from these brilliant ideas of *rationality and liberality*, if *rightly* drawn out to their CONCLUSIONS;—are evidently

ly the following, which, whilst these writers are *out of power* themselves, they wish to see established.

First. That, the most RATIONAL and LIBERAL government, is *that*, in which each man, is *solely his own governor*;—or in other words,—THAT STATE, is the BEST GOVERNED, WHICH HAS NO GOVERNMENT.

Secondly. That the MOST RATIONAL and LIBERAL of ALL RELIGIONS,—is *that*,—which admits of of the MOST INDIFFERENCE to it's PRECEPTS; and has LEAST INFLUENCE upon *men*, as MEMBERS of *society*;—or in other words,—that a RELIGION, is *then* MOST BENEFICIAL TO A STATE, when, it HAS LEAST INFLUENCE.

ANOTHER CAUSE—of the *prevalence* of *such* doctrines, is,—because, in reality, the TRUE CHARACTERISTICS of the

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION of this VERY ENLIGHTENED EIGHTEENTH CENTURY,—are NOT what these writers suppose,—and what, for the gratification of their own vanity,—they wish others to believe.—But on the contrary, they consist in *fact*,—in the ENORMOUS NUMBER of it's VORACIOUS READERS;—in the great ABUNDANCE of it's MULTIFARIOUS WRITERS;—and in the MULTITUDE of it's FLUENT SPEAKERS. And, at the same time also,—in it's WOEFUL PAUCITY of DEEP THINKERS;—SAGACIOUS INVESTIGATORS;—and ORIGINAL GENIUSES. These are clearly evidenced by it's boldness, and confidence in ASSERTION, it's weakness and incapacity in ARGUMENT. It's presumption and conceit, in supposing itself to be irradiated with the brightest light, when at the same time, even a very weak one, is too strong for it's very feeble optics.

For in proportion, as the acquisition of OPINIONS, has been facilitated, the attainment of KNOWLEDGE, has been diminished. As men, have had *more volumes* TO READ, they have devoted a *less portion* of *their time* TO STUDY. As BOOKS, have increased in NUMBERS, REASONING has decreased in ACUTENESS. And of all the phænomena, which this age has exhibited, in the regions of literature;—TWO will appear the MOST REMARKABLE, and WONDERFUL to future times; if there should arise an able and impartial critic, to trace the *rise, progress, and declension* of ITS OPINIONS.

First. That those authors,—who WROTE the MOST,—THOUGHT the LEAST.

Secondly. That those, who made the *loudest claims* to the GREATEST RATIONALITY, or to the HIGHEST POWERS OF REASONING; were the LEAST ELEVATED
above

above others, by *this* CHARACTERISTIC of man; and must, in the next century,—for the *very short* time,—that any obscure vestige of their memory, shall be traced, —be ranked amongst some of the *lower classes*, of the *worst reasoners*, of *any* age.

So well founded, do these positions appear to me, that I dare, *here*, to make the appeal to the *judgment* of POSTERITY; and even to call for your own writings, Sir, to be the evidence produced, upon which, the sentence of acquittal, or condemnation, should be passed.

When however, I am appreciating the literature of the age, I hope, I shall not be understood, as speaking of the *whole* Island of Great-Britain; but only of this *southern* part of it. For I have before acknowledged, in respect to our united brethren in the north, without assuming

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the arduous office of a reviewer, in determining upon the *truth*, or *falsehood* of their opinions;—that we certainly *there* find writers, possessed of DEEP THOUGHT, CLOSE INVESTIGATION, and BRILLIANT POWERS. Nor, when confined even within *these* bounds, do I hope, to be understood, as meaning to characterise the WHOLE of *this century*. For certainly, *considered* as an WHOLE; *it* will stand VERY HIGH in the annals of fame. Nor likewise, would I be understood, to include *all* the authors, who now write towards it's close. For the name, of *Mr. Burke* can not fail, to occur to every one's recollection; and no one indeed, can be so ignorant, as not to know, that there are likewise several other very ingenious writers, now living; though it would be an invidious, and odious task in an individual, to enumerate their names. Men, who,—notwithstanding the discouragements *they* have received, and every man
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of real genius, must receive, from partial criticism at present;—will, from their various pursuits, be ranked in *future times*, amongst some of the *bright ornaments*, of the literature of this country.

But, my intention is only, *more particularly* to *characterise* THOSE;—who,—by forming themselves into parties, and uniting into cabals,—strengthen their own confidence in themselves, and by mutual puffing each other, are so inflated with inflammable air, as to imagine, that they are able to soar like balloons, to the sublimest heights. And as the *vulgar*, whether, they be called the learned, or are truly denominated the unlearned, always mistake *assertions* for *proofs*, they readily give credit to *their own accounts* of *each other*, and hence, they become the writers, who are at *present*, the most heard of,—most talked of,—most quoted,—and most flattered.

It is from such instances only, I mean to *infer*, that the *conclusion* of this century, does *not* surpass the *foregoing*, nor by any means, *equal* it's own commencement. For, though many more as I have already said, are certainly now become readers, and writers, than there were formerly;—yet,—as they are not on *that* account, DEEPER THINKERS, and BETTER REASONERS,—the POPULARITY of any OPINION, can be NO PROOF of it's TRUTH.

There is indeed, one melancholy instance of neglected learning and ability, which will justly brand this age, with the severe censure of posterity; and of which, numbers must partake, who are not circumscribed within that narrow circle, of which I have just now, been drawing a description. I mean, FLOYER SYDENHAM: That most learned translator, and most philosophical annotator, upon *some* of the *dialogues*, of
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the *illustrious Plato*. But, so little was the *taste* of the age suited, either to the invaluable works of the author, or the incomparable notes of the translator, that the latter I understand,—died, on account of debt, in a common jail; WHO,—in any former age, in which, ALL MEN HIGH IN OFFICE, esteemed it their own highest honour, to patronize *genius* and *learning*,—would have acquired, what he was justly entitled to,—both, *wealth* and *honours*.

In ALL the LIBERAL and MECHANIC ARTS, there can be no doubt, but that this age *far* outshines any, which Britain has ever seen. In painting in particular, the genius of a REYNOLDS alone, darting it's rays, both from his *works*, and his *discourses*, diffuses a lustre around it's close, far brighter than the meridian splendour of any former century.

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In *electricity, magnetism, chemistry, &c.* it certainly has to boast, a large collection of *facts*, established upon well-instituted *experiments*: which, may perhaps supply another *Newton*, with many materials for a future system. And so far, Sir, as you have had your share, in contributing, to the collection

— *Sume Superbiam*

Quæstam merilis.

Lastly, then;—for *this*, follows as a consequence from the *preceding* reason; many mere momentary meteors, are in the literary hemisphere at present, mistaken for planets,—and planets for fixed stars. Consequently therefore, the *mass* of the *people*, conceiving the rays, which are merely reflected from the *moon*, to be the *direct* beams issuing from the *sun*;—they are incapable of distinguishing, the shades of
bodies

bodies from their outlines, and mistake what are only shadows, for real objects.

Thus, Sir, (to borrow your well-known metaphor) I have now layed, and set fire to a train, which has entirely blown up, ONE of your PRINCIPAL FORTS, from it's very foundations: and which has likewise, *already undermined* the OTHER: Though towards *that*,—*this* train, was not indeed, immediately directed, in a strait line. As to any musquetry, therefore, which you may have drawn up around you, as a guard to your own person; *these*, even your prudence and compassion should have spared; instead of betraying your own imbecility, by exposing those, to certain destruction, who are both too weak to resist an adversary, and too feeble to annoy him.

The firing a volley at THEM, can only be considered, as *a feu de joie*, after the victory.

victory. For, their powder, has, during the siege, lost all it's force, if it ever had any; and even the locks of their musquets, which were at first, extremely weak and ill constructed, are most of them now,—even shattered into pieces.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R X.

SIR,

WHEN instead of advancing, I rest upon my arms, and look back, upon the devastation, and demolition, which the irresistible force of my battery has produced,—and see numbers, already weeping over the scattered fragments, and desolated ruins of your *principal fort*;—PITY, prompts in me the wish, to slacken my career, and even to desist, from further triumph. It urges me, to refrain from adding, to the number of the conquered,

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and to spare the weakness, of the few of your forces, which still remain.

But, when it occurs to my recollection, that to a *soldier*,—CONTEMPT, is WORSE than DEATH;—it seems to me, most probable,—that the same sentiments are entertained by all, who are engaged in any other species of POLEMICKS; and then, even compassion teaches me, that it is more merciful to kill, than to save.

As therefore, you have arranged in some order, some few of your rank and file, which are still left: I shall employ a few minutes more, in advancing against *them*. For though it is true, that none of them, were first enlisted, and trained by *you*, but, are only some infirm, old troops, whom you picked up, from other generals, I shall now present them, with a few volleys of small arms; lest, *weak* as they are, they should, as I have said, deem the passing
them

them by unnoticed, as a greater disgrace; and which consequently, they would be much less willing to sustain, than to be covered with wounds, or left dead in the field.

I shall therefore hold no further parley, but immediately proceed to disperse, the feeble body, of light-armed troops, which you have stationed, in the *third letter*, page 22.

The *first* position you have taken, is this,—“that the REVOLUTION in this country, is an EVENT, which, *more* than *any* *thing* else, has *opened* the eyes of Englishmen, to the *true principles* of government.”

Now, Sir, by those, to *whom*, the revolution served in your opinion, as a substitute for the operation of couching, I conclude, that you must most assuredly mean

yourself, and your friends. For you certainly will not allow, that *any others, do understand the true principles*, of government. But, as I have already, I do not scruple to say, DEMONSTRATED, that *they* are the *very persons*, who have more *particularly MISUNDERSTOOD*, the *true principles* of that EVENT, as well as, THE FIRST *principles* of ALL GOVERNMENT; it follows,—that in this case,—“the *blind* are led “by the *blind*;”—and if therefore, they have had their eyes opened at all,—it can have really served to no other purpose,—than to make, their,—“*darkness visible*.”—But, as I have now in this work, erected, and lighted up so many beacons, for our guidance and security, I do not entertain the slightest apprehension,—for the *lasting peace, prosperity, and happiness*, of *these* kingdoms; nor feel the least atom of fear, lest this adumbration,—in which,—you and your friends are enveloped,—should ever degenerate into such a plague,—as that of
 Egypt;

Egypt;—so that the DARKNESS, should not only, be “SEEN,”—but also,—be even,—“FELT.”

That “*the great object of all government, is, the PUBLIC GOOD,—is certainly ONE of those undeniable truths, which springs, from the very origin of all government. This I have already asserted, and did always as readily allow;—upon the CONVICTION of REASON; as you can possibly have admitted it, upon your principles of AVOWED BIGOTRY, to Mr. LOCKE. But at the same time, I have also shown, that the deductions, which HE has drawn from it, and which you, as the shadow following the substance, likewise represent, are, in direct opposition to REASON.*

For, you maintain, “*that from THIS principle, it follows, that all magistrates are ANSWERABLE to the PEOPLE, for their conduct in office, and REMOVABLE at THEIR PLEASURE,*

“ PLEASURE, and that the RIGHT of RESIST-
 “ ING an *oppressive* government, THAT IS,
 “ SUCH, AS THE PEOPLE SHALL DEEM TO BE
 “ OPPRESSIVE, MUST BE HELD SACRED.”

Now, Sir, THESE PREMISES, and CON-
 CLUSIONS, appear to me, to be much far-
 ther distant from each other, than even
 your residence at *Birmingham*, from mine
 at *Great Yarmouth*. And, as you have not
 been so kind, as to erect any of those
direction-posts, called REASONS; OR ARGU-
 MENTS, to point us out the road, from the
 one, to the other; I should no more ex-
 pect, to set out from the *premises*, and ar-
 rive by a *strait line* at the *conclusion*, with-
 out wandering in scepticism, or plunging
 into the abyss of error; than, to set out
 from the *latter town*, and by the *same*
means to reach the former, without being
 drowned in a river, or foundered in a
 bog.

Besides,

Besides, in the *one* case, I have already shown;—that the road is *totally obstructed*, by an *inaccessible*, and *unpassable* mountain; which, entirely blocks up the passage. Because, from the very NATURE of ALL GOVERNMENT, it follows,—or rather,—the very *word*,—GOVERNMENT,—in itself,—IMPLIES,—that the GOVERNORS of a *state*,—are to RULE the GOVERNED;—NOT the GOVERNED, to RULE THE GOVERNORS.

Therefore, Sir, though you have been pleased to *observe*, in the same leaf, and no doubt *believe*,—that the “*public good*, “being the most NATURAL and RATIONAL “of *all rules*; and what, is MUCH MORE “EASY TO DETERMINE, than either, what, “—GOD HAS ORDAINED,—or,—what ANTIQUITY AUTHORIZES;” *true*, and *self-evident*, as such positions may be to you, and consequently, that legislation is the EASIEST of all tasks:—Yet, *that truth and self-evidence, must be totally undiscernible by*
me,—

me,—’till you have PROVED;—that the RIGHT of the PEOPLE,—is, to have the COMMAND OVER GOVERNORS; and the DUTY of GOVERNORS, is, to pay OBEDIENCE to the PEOPLE; and also, that the MOST ILLITERATE of MANKIND, CAN MUCH EASIER DISCOVER, WHAT CONDUCTS TO THE PUBLIC GOOD;—THAN GOD, CAN REVEAL IT.

In page 24, you tell us, “that men “surely can not be said to *give up* their “*natural rights*, by entering into a compact for the better *securing* of them.” By which, NATURAL RIGHTS, you tell us, you mean, LIFE, LIBERTY, and PROPERTY.

This proposition indeed, Sir, would be most certainly, not only *self-evident*, but even *identical*; did it not, a little unfortunately TAKE FOR GRANTED, that there ARE SUCH THINGS, AS NATURAL RIGHTS.

Now,

Now, on account of this unlucky accident, you must be under the unavoidable necessity, not only of *undertaking* a task, but also of *accomplishing* an exploit,—which,—I am afraid, is infinitely less suited to the strength of your mind, than the *hardest* labour,—or even *all* the labours of *Hercules* were, to the *vigour* of his body.

For, before this position, can possibly be admitted,—which indeed, you hold in common with your school-masters, though to you alone belong, the unparticipated honour of so clear, so accurate, and so very sensible a statement of it;—you must first DESTROY not only, the WHOLE CONCATENATION, but likewise, every *individual link* in the *chain*, of THAT REASONING,—which *holds*,—and *binds* together, the *foregoing letters*. But, as this is so arduous a task, that from fear of the accomplishment, you may not be willing to see the necessity for undertaking it; or, which, for

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want of clearer logical spectacles, you may not be able to discover;—permit me to exemplify it by a more familiar instance, which, having a reference to your own person, may be to *you*, easier of comprehension, than any other illustration, I could possibly produce.

Let us suppose then, some one to maintain,—that *Dr. Priestley*, has NOT *given up* all his CAPACITY for REASONING, by that portion of it, which, we find, he has *retained* in his *letters* to *Mr. Burke*.

Now certainly, no one could possibly be so foolish, as to maintain, that *if you have* RETAINED “*a capacity for reasoning*,” in those letters;—that you had, when writing them, either *lost it*, or *given it up*. But, still, there may notwithstanding, remain, *two* possible subjects of *dispute*. For, it is not quite impossible,—that some sceptical opponent to your admirer, might DOUBT, whether

whether you *ever had*, or even DENY, that you ever HAD,—at any time,—any *capacity for reasoning*; or even, if you *had*,—whether, you *retained any*, in your *letters to Mr. Burke*. And after reading these letters of mine, to which *yours* gave occasion, should any one be so *whimsical*, as to demand of your admirer, PROOFS of these points; HE must necessarily *undertake the Herculean* labour, of exhibiting them, before, he could procure from the objector, any *assent*, to his *first position*. But, *with such a requisition*, it appears to me, as *difficult*, to find *any man* ABLE to COMPLY; as it seems *impossible*, that YOU should be *capable*, of SATISFYING the *demand*, in the *former case*;—for the sole purpose of illustrating which, I have introduced, this *latter instance*.

As to all your little poppings, in defence of the positions, which relate to the *election*, and *dethronement of kings*, they were

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evidently

evidently charges, only of powder. For, all the shot, which is alone fitted for the maintenance of such posts, has been already compleatly destroyed, by the long train of artillery, which I arranged, opposite to your fort: so that it would now be in me, a criminal waste of powder, not only to fire off a single charge, but even to make your soldiers wink, by giving them a flash in the pan.

But, Sir, there is *one* passage in this illustrious THIRD LETTER, which, though it entirely delivers us from all employment, of the faculty of thinking, for the purpose of refuting it; and affords us the most entire dispensation, from all investigation, by offering us only, what we have hundreds of times before, both read, heard, reprobated, and despised; yet,—I can not pass it by unnoticed; as it gave birth to a reflection, which was to me attended with great pain, though the relation of it,

may

may perhaps, to others, be followed by much benefit.

For, it gave *me* reason to lament, that notwithstanding, the vast *labour* you have employed, in *putting together*, such a *multiplicity* of books, as, you have already FABRICATED, that, you had not, *before* the publication of your letters to Mr. Burke, added to THEM, one labour more. The task, I mean,—of *making* an ENGLISH DICTIONARY; for the *benefit* of *yourself*, and of *your friends*. For, by *this omission*, you have most unluckily *puzzled yourself*, and *them*, as to the *meaning* of a word,—which is, ONE of the most COMMON in the ENGLISH language; and even denotes a person, exercising an office,—which is of daily, and hourly use, to the *generality* of the world. Not to keep you longer in suspense,—I must inform, you,—it is,—the word,—SERVANT.

Now,

Now, Sir, because, it is the *duty* of the KING, a MAGISTRATE, &c. to *do good*, or, to *render service* to the *people*, who are *intrusted* to *their care*; *therefore*, you and your friends maintain,—that, *they* are the SERVANTS of the *people*.

I must confess, that for some time, I thought,—this expression, was intended, only, as an *harmless pun*; by which, you might hope to rouse your readers, from any inclination to sleep, or propensity to drowsiness; or by which, you might expect to relieve them from fatigue, or even perhaps, to soften their features, into a smile. But, however true it may possibly be,—that it has produced BOTH of those effects, upon *some* of them; yet,—that no such consequence, was *intended* by you, I am now *perfectly convinced*,—from the most accurate attention, to the uniform gravity, and constant solemnity of your diction. For, even when you tell us, that *KINGS* are the ob-
jects

jects of your laughter; your words have not the least tendency, to move a single muscle, in the face of any other man; except, it should chance to be, at,—and not, with you.

I must beg leave therefore, just to observe, that however, *I might* be inclined to concur with you, in a *serious* application, of the *term*,—SERVANT, to the KING, *could* it be CONFINED to *his office singly*, without being extended to others;—yet, I must confess, I feel some reluctance, to the adoption of such an application of it; because, men are so prone to err, that some of them, would then perhaps imagine that it may with *equal*, or even *still greater* propriety, be applied, both, to you, and ME. And though, for my own part, I am totally indifferent, as to *any diminution of respect*, which might chance to be the *consequence*, of *such* an application to *myself*;—yet, I should be extremely sorry,
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on *your* account; if, any, of *your own* congregation, should treat you with only *half the contempt*, by considering you, as THEIR SERVANT; that you do a *king*,—by considering HIM, as YOURS.

Besides, if this were to be the case, the very nature of the *relation*, between you, and your flock, would most unfortunately, be totally reversed. For then, it would be *their office* to *teach*, and *yours* to *learn*. It would be *their duty* to *preach*, and *yours* to *hear*. It would then, be *their* RIGHT to *issue out their commands* to YOU, and *your DUTY* TO OBEY THEIR INSTRUCTIONS.

But, how disagreeable, and irksome, *such* a situation must *necessarily* be to you; I can easily conceive, from that *noble freedom of spirit*, which breaths through *all* your writings; and which so irrefragably proves,—that you would spurn with indignation, at
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the very idea, of submitting to any man's direction, or even of acknowledging, any man, as your superior.

But, that such, would soon be the horrible state of subjection, to which you would be reduced, if your congregations, should once give the same appellation to you, which,—you do,—to the king,—is not merely a theoretical conjecture, but is a fact, which may be said to be sanctioned, by experience.

For, I know from the information, of some of the ministers of your persuasion, that this is the ACTUAL state of slavery, to which, some of them, have been already reduced. Of which, they complained to me, as a burden too grievous to be borne, and which therefore, they lamented as the heaviest of afflictions. Now, Sir, if the whole multitude of Unitarian congregations, should once universally add to their other enlightened tenet,

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that

that *Jefus Christ* is to be treated *only* as a *mere man*, this alfo,—that their *minifters* are to be treated *only* as *mere fervants*;—how miserable then would be your condition. And in the instances, to which I allude, where, *ſuch* has been the PRAC-TICE of ſome congregations, they were certainly thoſe, *who had embraced the THEORY*. For *they*, it ſeems, were juſt as *incapable* as *you*,—of conceiving the *pal-pable difference*, and *diſtinction*,—there is,—between,—the DOING ANOTHER A SER-VICE,—and,—the BEING HIS SERVANT. Hence therefore, they thought themſelves authoriſed, to *compel their minifters*, (under the penalty of the loſs of their *wages*) to preach SUCH DOCTRINES, as the *richeſt* and *greateſt*, though not perhaps, the *wiſeſt* members of the congregation, ſhould pleaſe to COMMAND; and reſtrained them from preaching *ſuch*, as the MINISTERS, would *themſelves* have choſen.

I will therefore beg leave, Sir, with all due deference, to submit, and leave the question, entirely to your own determination. viz. Whether,—*as* KINGS are *no more bound* to OBEY the COMMANDS of *their* SUBJECTS, than YOU ARE *those* of your AUDITORS;—it may not be,—in YOU, —*as just* and *as right*,—*as proper* and *as decent*,—*as humble* and *as rational*,—not to give the appellation of SERVANT, to a KING,—*as*,—it is in your CONGREGATION, —NOT to give it,—to YOU.

There are, Sir, likewise, some other passages, in *this* very letter of yours, to which, I am now paying my respects; which indisputably prove,—that had it been preceded by the manufacture of that very useful, but despised work,—a *dictionary*, it must necessarily have contained fewer apparent errors; and would have been of inestimable advantage to your *friends*. They being, I am persuaded, as much determin-

ed, *not to unlearn* any thing, which they fancy, they have been taught by *you*; as *you* can possibly be resolved, not even to *examine* the *truth* of any position, which *you* imagine, *you* have *learned* from Mr. LOCKE. The *principle*, is the same in *both*; though to be sure, the *authorities*, are *somewhat different*.

For, *you* proceed to censure the expression, of—"OUR SOVEREIGN LORD "THE KING," though only indeed, upon *political* principles. But, as some of your *eleves* condemn it likewise, upon *religious* ones, I doubt not, but *you* also have the *same* objection to it; though both, I am certain, highly venerate the title,—of—"THE MAJESTY OF THE PEOPLE."

You are of opinion, that the *first* term, if it ought to be used at all, should be applied to the *parliament*.

Now,

Now, if you mean by *this word*,—only, —the HOUSES OF LORDS, and COMMONS; had you but consulted some *Encyclopædia*, which you must *necessarily* have done, upon every *principle* of *book-making*, had you undertaken to manufacture a *new dictionary*; —you would most probably, never have urged this objection. For then, you must have been uncommonly unfortunate indeed, had you not learned from some one, or other of them, that the *Lords* and *Commons*, are only portions of the legislature; but, that the KING HIMSELF, also, forms, a constituent part of the legislative body. That every law therefore, requires *his assent*, as much as the assents of the two houses: And his NEGATIVE, is as perfectly CONSTITUTIONAL, for the REJECTION of an act, as that, of a MAJORITY, in *either* house. You would then also have known, that, when we speak of the KING AS OUR SOVEREIGN LORD; we do not, by that expression characterise him, as a *part* of
the

the *legislature*, but as POSSESSING *completely in himself*, the WHOLE EXECUTIVE POWER of the kingdom; and therefore, that IT IS A TITLE, to which, the PARLIAMENT, in *no sense*, in which, you can possibly take that word, can have any more claim, than, even the *revolution society*; or, as Mr. Burke calls it, the "*society for revolutions.*"

By the *same* means, you would most probably have removed also, any *religious scruples*, which you may entertain, as well as your disciples,—as to the propriety of the *same* title.

For, no doubt, but you might then have gleaned up, at least, *so much* acquaintance with *logic*, as would have imparted to you, *some* knowledge of the *proper* use, and *signification* of WORDS; and taught you, that the *very same epithets*, may, by their application to *different subjects*,—receive, from the
subjects

subjects themselves, either, an enlargement, or limitation to their significations. Consequently therefore, though it would undoubtedly be blasphemy in us, to call the KING, OUR SOVEREIGN LORD GOD;—yet, it is certainly, not at all inconsistent with *piety*, with *innocence*, and *good sense*, to call HIM, OUR SOVEREIGN LORD THE KING.

And indeed, where, even custom only, in a state had authorised, or sanctioned *such a title*;—to withhold it, is even to disobey an authority, which I hope you will pardon me for thinking;—though I differ from you in opinion,—*still greater*, than even yours. I mean, a learned ancient writer, called an Apostle, notwithstanding you, have discovered *his mistakes*;—who, has recommended to us,—I dare not, for fear of offence,—say,—*enjoined us*;—“to pay custom, to whom custom is due, and honour, to whom honour.”

You

You object indeed, I know, for, so you have yourself told us,—to *such titles*, because, you think,—they are apt to inflate KINGS with PRIDE. But is not *this* a *passion*, which, it is as necessary to be guarded against,—for the sake of the peace, comfort, and happiness of society,—in SUBJECTS, as well as in KINGS. And will you then, that you may act consistently, withhold from *every* man, of any other rank, *his* title, from the fear, that the bestowing it, might excite the same passion in *him*.

Some men, for instance, may be proud of the title,—of REVEREND DOCTOR,—however it may have been *acquired*, or whatever *right* they may have to it, or to whatever rank, they may be *entitled* to derive from it, in this kingdom; where almost every poor curate, has an unquestionable right to a rank, *superior* to numbers of those, who happen, to be *so* dignified. But, were *he* to attempt to assume it, he would

would soon be abashed into humiliation, by the supercilious brows of those, who, notwithstanding treat with *contempt*, the *titles* of KINGS. Nay, though *you yourself*, may totally *disregard* the *recommendation* of the APOSTLE, give me leave to ask you, this question, whether, *even* YOU, Sir, would not have thought *me*,—if I had not addressed you,—*as*, THE REVEREND: DOCTOR PRIESTLEY,—to have been GUILTY, at *least*, of a BREACH OF GOOD MANNERS.

From hence then, it clearly follows, that you yourself must not only deem *that* man, if not ignorant of the rules, yet, however, to be deficient in the practice of good-breeding, who is so tenacious of his own personal consequence, as to refuse to others, the titles and places, which are *really due* to them; *but* him also, who even refuses them to others,—from *courtesy*, which they ought

K k

not,

not, though they often do claim, as a
RIGHT.

I doubt not therefore, but that you likewise think, that *good manners* are of much more consequence, to the comfort of individuals; and of much more importance to society; than some are apt to conceive; and consequently, that there are classes of people, who pay a much less attention to it, as a part of *education*, than it deserves. As it certainly tends, to banish rudeness and ferociousness from society, and to produce the same OUTWARD ACTS of kindness, gentleness, and humility, which christianity upon a different, and better principle, enjoins. So that the humblest and best *christian*, is in fact, the *best bred* gentleman.

Never therefore, I am certain, shall we discover in future, any inclination in you, and your friends, to withhold

hold from others, those titles, which, the *rites* and *customs* of a state, authorise any rank to assume. Since it is evident, that whoever feels ~~to that inclination~~, is actuated by the very *same* passion, which instigates the *possessors* of titles, to *pride* themselves upon them. Convinced, as you undoubtedly are, that whoever refuses to another, the appellation or the rank, which is due to him; can only be deemed as a counterpart to surly *Diogenes*, trampling, with *Cynic arrogance* upon the *carpets* of that *Plato*; who was as much superior to the *philosophers* of old, and also, of *this enlightened age*, in the *manners* of a gentleman; as,—in the brilliancy, and copiousness of his imagination;—the vivacity, and extent of his sagacity;—and the importance, and profundity of his discoveries.

As to that expression, which is so great a favourite with some philosophers, and undoubtedly, not less so with the vul-

WAR, for it is to them, the title belongs,
 —I mean, “THE MAJESTY OF THE PEOP-
 LE;”—had you undertaken the task, of
 which I lament the want of execution;—
 the explanation of this term, would soon
 have been very easy to you; and you
 would, I doubt not, readily have seen, the
 absurdity and contradiction, which, it in-
 volves. For, though I do not think, that
 any dictionary-maker, has yet been so en-
 lightened, as to join these words together,
 as a well-known title; nor even quoted any
 passage, from any enlightened writer, to au-
 thorise such a junction; yet, to have dis-
 covered the beautiful ANANTITHESIS, which
 they form both in sense and sound, there
 would have been no occasion for you, to
 have had recourse to the ingenious *Cham-*
bers, nor the still more valuable *Scotch*
Encyclopædia, now publishing; but, you
 might have made the discovery, from the
 very first school-boy's dictionary, you had
 taken

taken up; if, his moistened thumb, had not torn off, or obliterated, the words.

For at what time, could this same

much talked of MAJESTY, be breathed into the people? Not surely, in a *state of ma-*

ture, when no government exists,—but each man is enjoying his NATURAL RIGHTS of

FREEDOM and EQUALITY, for the DESTRUCTION of each other? Was it then,

when no longer able to support, so miserable a state of existence, they were seeking to get rid of THEIR OWN SELF-DI-

RECTION, by submitting, to almost *any* man, who would take upon him the labour, of

GOVERNING them? Was it in either of these situations? If it were. However

glorious, such states may appear to modern philosophers, in these *enlightened times*,

THEY,—the PEOPLE,—evidently preferred

submission to a GOVERNOR, to *any* SUCH MAJESTY. Experience, having soon taught

them, from THEIR OWN INCAPACITY,—for
such

such a choice; that it was much better to trust, to the seeming casual succession of nature, than to their own ignorant selection. Little dreaming I ween, at *that* time, that, they were thus surrendering up THEIR MAJESTY, of which, they had never heard.

Or was it, AFTER THEY HAD SUBMITTED, and were BOUND TO OBEY the WILL, or WILLS, of others? If *this* be the TIME meant; had you, but taken the method I have proposed, and which I lament, did *not* occur to your thoughts; had you but looked out, only,—the words, *majesty, sovereignty, government, obedience, and subjects*, you would have seen clearly, the absurdity, and contradiction, of such a phrase. When therefore, you had heard, such an expression used, at the *revolution-society*; your eye-brows, would spontaneously have expressed the contempt, you inwardly felt; and you would have been more disposed, had

had it been consistent with your good manners, to have hissed the persons, who gave such nonsense for a toast; than to applaud it, and drink it, perhaps,—“ WITH
“THREEXTIMES THREE.”

By this time I think, even you, Sir, must see *clearly*, how very necessary it is, that men, should most accurately examine, and most precisely conceive the MEANING of WORDS; before they can pretend, to lay any claim to the character of REASONERS; or can form any pretence, to rank themselves, in the number of WRITERS, SPEAKERS, or of CRITICS. From the want of this habit, which must be the *substratum* of every good composition,—it is,—that we may often hear a man speaking fluently for an hour, when to all the purposes of instruction, he has really been saying nothing; or read a folio, which though it cost the author, the labour of years to write, truly establishes no other
proof,

proof,—than this;—that other writer, has proved nothing. For, when by an accurate scrutiny, into a fundamental proposition, we have once found, that the speaker, or the writer, had no clear conception of the terms, by which, it was compacted, and we have ourselves discovered, their true and proper signification, we shall see the speech, or the book, at once lose it's only principle of cohesion, and crumble into dust.

That you were not indeed *much* sooner aware of the necessity for this practice, and did not most sedulously endeavour to cultivate it; I have the pleasure of thinking, was owing in no fault in me, but is wholly to be imputed, to your own neglect. For, *above twenty years* ago, I not only pointed *this*, out to you, but also, most seriously advised and intreated you, to give a close attention, to the *study* of every branch of the art of LOGIC, not
indeed,

indeed, that you might improve, but that you might acquire a talent for ratiocination. And, the *more* clearly to *evince* to you, the extreme want, and absolute necessity you were under, of following this advice, I exhibited to you, the most *direct*, and *strongest* proof;—by writing a little essay, entitled PRIESTLEY, *against* PRIESTLEY, and showing, from your deficiency in these respects, in *your essay upon government*, HOW YOU YOURSELF,—CONFUTED YOURSELF.

Upon this occasion indeed, a person who called himself *Eberacensis*, threw down his gauntlet, and denied, that I had proved the charge. He certainly advanced to the combat, with much seeming spirit, but with great real weakness; with a confidence, which nothing but ability, could have justified, but with such powers, as only the most bashful modesty, could have suited. The very

first onset brought him breathless, and senseless, to the ground; never more to rise. And I suppose, that by this time, at least, you recognize in me,—if you did not before,—a certain writer,—who formerly assumed, the name,—of *Aristarchus*.

But perhaps, you mistook me for an enemy, and therefore were resolved, not to pay any regard, to *my advice*. Should you however, plead *this* as an excuse, you must yourself be sensible, that it can not by any means, prove your justification. For, you can not possibly, have so far forgotten the rudiments of your education, as not to remember, that—*fas est et ab hoste doceri*. Your conduct therefore, was as impolitic, as your supposition was ill-founded. For, what possible advantage could accrue to any *enemy*, by *recommending* any thing, which, must necessarily conduce to *your good*; and possibly, to his own injury. But with the most
unfeigned

unfeigned truth, I can assure you; that if you *did really*, or *do now*, so esteem me, you do me great injustice, and are yourself much mistaken. I can most solemnly affirm, that there never was, *that man* existing in the world, for whom I ever entertained the least dislike, because, we differed in opinion, or disagreed in sentiment. For, it is almost impossible to conceive, a greater contrariety of opinions, to subsist between two men, who were both warmly attached, to the truth of christianity, than between me, and my late most excellent friend,—Dr. John Jebb; whom I believe you well knew, and highly valued; yet, —we lived in the most uninterrupted harmony with each other,—from the commencement of our acquaintance in the university, to the day of his death; though we never met without disputing, and by the account of his life, I find, we were once warmly engaged against each other, in a

public controversy. Which, had I at *that time* known, should have borne some marks of the sincere affection, with which, I loved the man, whatever might be the earnestness, with which I attacked the arguments of the writer.

For, never shall I cease to cherish the sweet remembrance of him here,—and,—O! —that I may be deemed worthy to live with him, in eternal friendship hereafter. Many there were, who did injustice to his character, whilst living, and who, now still know not, one half of his real worth. For, he having early in life, imbibed some strong prejudices on religious subjects,—his habits and connections, led him rather to cherish them; than afterwards, to employ his own excellent understanding, in examining, and eradicating them. And, as his honest heart, was always warm in defence of the sentiments which he embraced;

ced; he was sometimes led by his attachment to others, to *appear to some* as a *fiery zealot* for his opinions; who in reality, would not designedly have given a moment's pain to any, the meanest sensitive creature. For, no man ever possessed, more "*of the milk of human kindness*," and never did I know, amongst men, (for I must mark that distinction) a purer spirit, —wafted to heaven.—Pardon this digression, and permit me,—that,—

*His saltem accumulem donis, et fungar inani
Munere.*

But, Sir, from this pleasing,—sad remembrance, I must once more turn my steps, to the thorny paths of controversy; though they will not at present be detained, but for some few minutes, longer.

Pardon me then, Sir, that if,—well knowing the "*rapid glances*," you are wont to take

take of books, I request the favour of you, and can assure you, that *this request* is made, as much for *your benefit*, as, *my own*;—that,—when you do me the honour, of reading these letters,—you would be so good,—as most *attentively* to peruse them,—TWICE at LEAST,—before, you undertake to answer them. Because otherwise, most probably, your statement of my opinion, will, through inattention, be a misrepresentation, and then instead of engaging with *me*, you will be fighting only with the air. For, as it is impossible for you, to *reply* to MY ARGUMENTS, if you have not allowed yourself, TIME sufficient to *understand* them; and *such a reply*, constitutes the very ESSENCE of all CONTROVERSY; YOU will be under the NECESSITY, of having recourse to your most usual mode,—of *calling* THAT an ANSWER,—which,—without even aiming, at a REFUTATION of your opponent's REASONING,—contains
merely,—

merely,—a RE-CAPITULATION, and RE-ASSERTION, of *your own opinions*. A mode of proceeding, which I can assure you, has such an effect upon some *acute reasoners*, as to produce in them instantly,—a *nausea*, at the very sight of any of your works.

Be so good therefore, I beseech you, as to exert your own utmost endeavours, and even call to your aid, all the assistance you can procure, that instead of taking the meaning of my terms for granted,—you may be enabled,—most attentively to investigate the *signification* of *every word* I have used, in *every proposition*, which I have advanced; and instead of contenting yourself, with REPROBATING my CONCLUSIONS, WITHOUT PROOF of THEIR being DESERVING of CENSURE, be pleased with the *utmost severity* to *scrutinise* the *chain* which *connects*, the CONCLUSIONS, WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE PREMISES. For, these are
the

the only effectual means, by which, you can either DESTROY my system, or that you can REBUILD *Mr. Locke's*.

It is to erect, or repair, a fit habitation for TRUTH, that is,—or ought to be, our primary object. And though she is then placed in a mansion most suitable to her dignity, when it is like those, which a *Plato* or a *Burke* has erected for her, ornamented with the finest polished marble pillars of the Corinthian order; yet, will she notwithstanding, sometimes deign to dwell in an humble cottage, supported merely by wooden pillars roughly hewn out of oak, and wrought only in rustic work.

That I might, the sooner, give you an opportunity of attempting to execute this work, so far at least as relates to CIVIL GOVERNMENT, well knowing how impatient you are, under any deprivation of labour;

bour; I have divided this correspondence, —into TWO PARTS; that you might not be robbed of the pleasure of returning an answer, 'till *that time* was elapsed, which, it would be requisite for me, to employ in writing the *second* part.

I well know, with what agility and pleasure, you always advance to the fight; and with what tardiness, and reluctance, you retire. The nimbleness of the one, I have been sometimes induced to think, shows more spirit, than policy. But the slowness of the latter, can not be accused of want of art; however, some may have suspected it of the appearance of vanity. For, often have we seen *you*, not only like *Antæus*, as soon as you have been thrown upon the earth, instantly rebound, with renewed strength: But even,—when your adversary, has like another *Hercules*, *really vanquished* you, and suffered your *lifeless* corpse, to fall to the ground;—we have

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likewise

likewise seen you rise once more, re-animated with your former confidence;—and when you knew the conqueror was certainly retired from the field, never more meaning to return;—we have heard you challenge him again to the combat, sing a triumphal song, and claim the wreath of victory,—as if *you* were really the victor, not the vanquished.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

S. COOPER.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

E R R A T A.

Page 2, l. 12, between the words, *to* and *even*, insert '*almost*.'

Page 18, l. 4, in the note, insert, between *when* and *they*, '*even*.'

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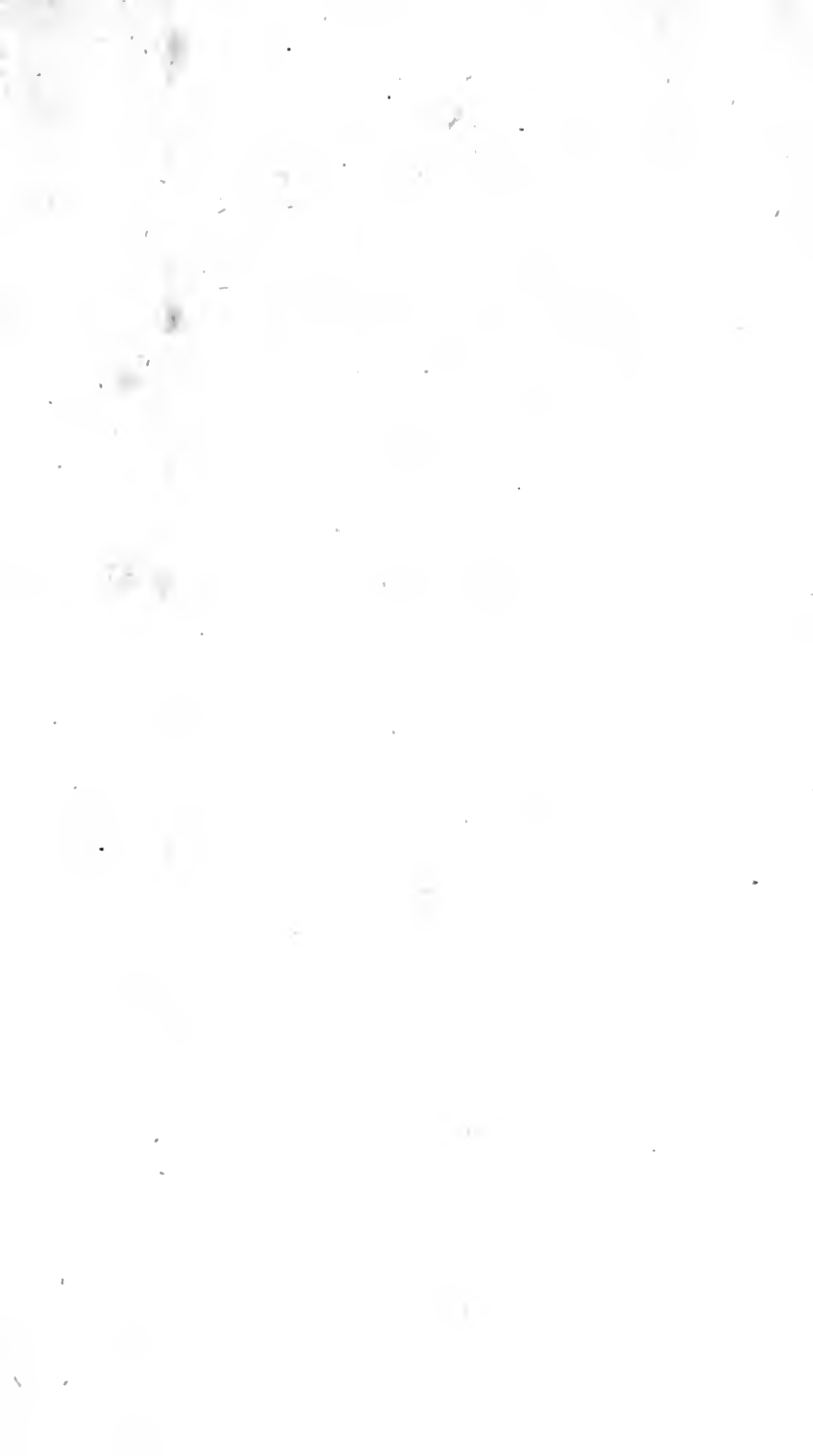
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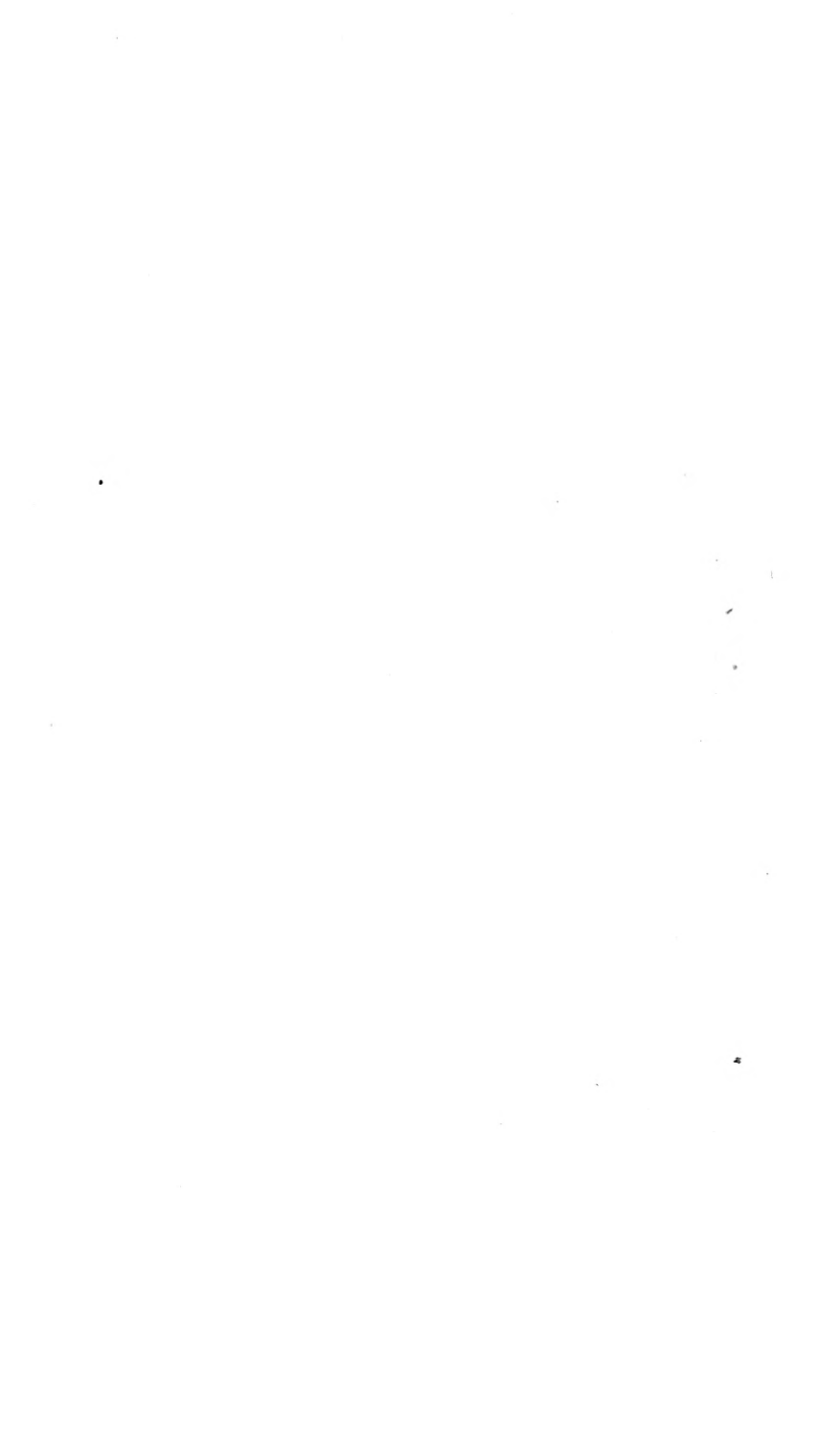
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